

State Senator
Don White
41st Senatorial District



Senate of Pennsylvania

April 8, 2010

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Peter J. Salvatore, Regulatory Coordinator
Pennsylvania Insurance Department
Bureau of Administration
1326 Strawberry Square
Harrisburg, PA 17120

RE: Proposed regulation No. 16A – Behavior Specialist

Dear Mr. Salvatore:

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to comment on this proposed regulation. I am concerned with a few aspects of this proposal that I respectfully ask you to review and consider amending.

It is my understanding this proposed regulation simply calls for a standard of certification as opposed to a licensure requirement. I believe this is too lenient for providers who support efforts in the clinical community to set a minimum standard of qualifications and training for those interacting with patients in the health care delivery system. This lack of licensure requirement is projected to create significant hurdles, while lower the standard for the general public and reduce Pennsylvania's ability to ensure professional and competent practice.

This aspect especially causes me concern as it relates to autism treatment under Act 62. This regulation should have the same standard for patients who see marriage or family therapists or professional counselors. The Behavior Specialist certification should be structured to require current licensure or state education certification before an applicant can apply for the certification and should be seen as a specialty credential.

I am also concerned about the provision in the regulation that would allow a previously certified behavior specialist to reactivate an inactive certification by merely paying the renewal fee and reactivation fee. Allowing this without ensuring continued education will place patients in inadequate care. Continuous education is imperative in treating certain disorders, especially autism spectrum disorder.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on this proposed regulation and your review of my concerns with it. It is important we understand the importance of licensure requirements so individuals may receive the utmost care.

Sincerely,

Don White
Senator, 41st District
DCW/akd

cc: Acting Secretary Harriet Dichter, Department of Public Welfare
Kim Kaufman, IRRC

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