



STATE OF DELAWARE
STATE COUNCIL FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
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The Honorable John Carney
Governor

John A. McNeal
Director

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 28, 2020

TO: All Members of the Delaware State Senate
and House of Representatives

FROM: Mr. J. Todd Webb, Chairperson
State Council for Persons with Disabilities

RE: H.B. 201 (Statewide Program for Services for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder)

The State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) has reviewed H.B. 201 which would amend 14 Del. C. § 1332 and require that Department of Education (DOE) to administer the statewide program for services for students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and require DOE to hire a Director for the program.

SCPD previously expressed concerns about the program being administered within the Christina School District, including the "statewide" program not actually being statewide because it is centered in New Castle County; difficulty tracking students across the state in need of services because of a lack of data availability from the DOE; funding issues; and changes in student population since the start of the program over 40 years ago.

Placing the program under the DOE, and not within a school district or other entity, may alleviate the aforementioned concerns. SCPD previously supported similar legislation for other low incidence populations, including the deaf and hard-of-hearing. Current Council priorities for 2020 include support for legislation such as H.B. 201.

SCPD endorses the proposed legislation but also encourages the Legislature to consider the feasibility of using this approach for the Delaware School for the Deaf and the Division for the Visually Impaired.

Thank you for your consideration and please contact SCPD if you have any questions or comments regarding our observations or position on the proposed legislation.

cc: Ms. Laura Waterland, Esq.
Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens
Developmental Disabilities Council

HB 201- statewide program services for students with autism 1-28-2020