

902 Hurley Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850

Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee
Maryland State Senate
Annapolis, MD

To the Esteemed Members of the Committee:

I strongly urge you to support Senate Bill 0209 - Special Education - Prolonged School Closure - Extension of Education Services.

As a parent of a 19 year-old with Autism, I can tell you that the COVID-19 crisis has had a deep and profound impact on my son's education. Health and Safety priorities demanded a move to remote learning. Although his teachers and school administrators are doing an admirable job under very challenging circumstances, the opportunities to get hands-on vocational training—training so critical as he prepares to transition to life after educational services end—have been non-existent.

This situation is understandable. Special needs individuals are highly susceptible to severe health impacts from COVID-19. Furthermore, it is difficult to get them to follow social distancing guidelines—especially in job-training environments. However, the fact remains that this student population needs adequate training and supports to help them become vibrant, contributing members of society after school ends.

This is why SB0209 fills such a critical need. By extending eligibility for education services after their scheduled graduation date, it provides special needs young adults with the opportunity to make up for lost training opportunities after the COVID-19 crisis subsides.

Please give my child, and others like him, every chance to succeed. Vote in favor of SB0209.

Sincerely,

David Milobsky

Jason Milobsky's Father