



**Senator Jarrett Coleman, Chair
Senate Intergovernmental Operations Committee
459 Main Capitol
Senate Box 203016
Harrisburg, Pa 17120
Sent via email at JColeman@pasen.gov**

June 6, 2025

Re: SB6

Dear Senator Coleman,

I am writing regarding SB657 on behalf of MAX, an association of human service organizations serving individuals with intellectual disabilities, autism, and behavioral health challenges in Southeast PA, including Bucks County.

MAX values the acknowledgment and endeavors to assist more individuals on the intellectual disability waiting list. We agree that the system must enhance its capacity to serve additional individuals, particularly those with unique and complex needs. We understand the urgency this situation imposes on the families of these individuals and genuinely believe that it needs to be addressed.

Although SB657 has good intentions, it may unintentionally harm the system. The current system, though imperfect, has benefited from years of input from various stakeholders, including families. The current system provides methods for families to access necessary services.

The system faces major challenges, including limited funding, workforce shortages, and regulatory demands. Furthermore, the system is only starting to recognize the potential of technology. SB657 will not remove these substantial obstacles

If enacted, the bill may change the system to resemble settings from 50 years ago, where large congregate environments limited individuals' options. These large settings do not reduce costs, as demonstrated by Pennsylvania's state-run institutions' per capita costs compared to those of community services per capita costs.

We believe that there may be solutions available without the need for a broad initiative such as SB 657. MAX requests that SB 657 be temporarily suspended until stakeholders can collaborate to address the system's inadequacies. MAX is willing to assist in any way with this effort.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Diane Conway". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Diane Conway, Ph.D.

CEO