

CALIFORNIA ADVOCATES, INC.



August 16, 2013

Dennis K. Albiani

TO: Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee

Michael D. Belote

FROM: Julianne Broyles 
On Behalf of California Association of Health Underwriters

Julianne A. Broyles

SUBJECT: **SB 126 (STEINBERG)—HEALTH CARE COVERAGE: PERVASIVE
DEVELOPMENTAL DISORDER OR AUTISM - SUPPORT
SCHEDULED FOR HEARING: AUGUST 19, 2013**

John F. O'Malley

Ralph F. Simoni

The California Association of Health Underwriters (CAHU) is pleased to **SUPPORT SB 126 (Steinberg)**, as amended August 8, 2013, that ensures continued coverage for those with autism or developmental disorders by providing a five-year extension to the existing program.

SB 126 extends, until July 1, 2019, the sunset date of an existing state health benefit mandate that requires health plans and health insurance policies to cover behavioral health therapy for pervasive developmental disorder or autism.

Health plans and health insurers are already required to provide coverage for these conditions provided it is medically necessary under both state and federal health parity laws. CAHU believes that **SB 126** will keep an important door open for five more years to ensure those diagnosed with pervasive developmental or autism receive medically necessary treatment from qualified autism services providers.

CAHU is the state's largest association of health insurance agents, brokers and other health insurance industry professionals. Our members help millions of individual Californians and businesses evaluate, select, purchase and use their health care coverage plans, resulting in greater health and financial security. CAHU agents and brokers also act as advocates for policyholders and their families when coverage disputes arise. CAHU agents and brokers perform many functions for small employers with respect to managing their employee benefits program--at no additional cost to the small employer.

For these reasons, CAHU urges your "AYE" vote on **SB 126 (Steinberg)** when it comes before you for consideration.

cc: Office of Governor Brown
The Honorable Darrell Steinberg
Lisa Murawski, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Anthony Archie, Assembly Republican Caucus Fiscal Office