

Laura J. Kennedy
President

Steven Kroll
Executive Director

MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT A.5141 (Santabarbara) and S.4256 (Carlucci)

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to vocational rehabilitation services for enhancing communication supports

NYSARC, Inc. strongly supports A.5141 (Santabarbara) and S.4256 (Carlucci). NYSARC is the nation's largest parent governed nonprofit organization serving people with developmental disabilities. Through its forty-eight local Chapters, NYSARC provides direct supports and services to thousands of individuals with intellectual, developmental, and other disabilities and their families.

This legislation directs the Commissioner of the State Education Department to promulgate new regulations to include communication support as a vocational rehabilitation service that is available to people with disabilities seeking employment. A common barrier to employment for people with disabilities includes difficulty communicating due to a variety of physical, mental and emotional issues. Therefore, including communication support services as a vocational rehabilitation service is an effective and commonsense approach to facilitate the acquisition of gainful employment for many individuals with disabilities.

As an added protection, this legislation requires these communication support services to be provided by qualified providers including State licensed speech-language pathologists, audiologists, or individuals trained in treatment for social pragmatic language impairment.

*A family-based organization
working with and for people
who have intellectual and other
developmental disabilities.*