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Honorable Senator Cortese
Senate Education Committee
State Capitol, Room 2083
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: OPPOSE SB 692

Dear Honorable Cortese, & Members of the Senate Education Committee:

In solidarity with California Educators of the Deaf (CAL-ED) and on behalf of both California Association of the Deaf (CAD) and CAL-ED boards, we are writing to express our strong opposition to SB 692 as it relates to Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children's education and placement.

SB 692 will "prioritize Least Restrictive Environment as measured by a percentage of pupils with individualized education programs who are 6 to 21 years of age, inclusive, and served instead in a regular classroom 80 percent or more of the day." Furthermore, by prioritizing LRE, SB 692 disregards Deaf students' right to placement based on their communication needs as required by state laws CA Educ Code § 56360 and CA Educ Code § 56361.

This bill is misleading legislators about Federal Law regarding Special Education Indicator 5A. Indicator 5A is not intended as a benchmark, nor is it required! Additionally, this bill does not clearly show that the data collection also includes 5B and 5C asking for percentages of students attending other programs. This is simply a collection of data that is not required by states.

We oppose this blanket approach towards all children with disabilities. Total inclusion is a denial to a supportive, accommodating environment, and a denial to an accessible language rich environment for the following reasons. In addition, we oppose SB 692 for the following reasons:

SB692 will exacerbate the epidemic of language deprivation syndrome that has been plaguing deaf students who do not get access to a sign language. Thus, they cannot acquire language as typically as deaf children who are exposed fully to a sign language, and as typically as hearing children who are exposed to a spoken language. Check out this book, *Language Deprivation and Deaf Mental Health* (Glickman & Hall, 2019).

Additionally, regular classroom teachers would have to be re-trained to accommodate each and every disability, which would require more money in terms of training hours. If the teachers are not trained, the disabled and deaf students suffer. There is no win-win situation here, but rather a lose-lose situation.

Upon closing, although we are a group of varying Deaf voices, there are also voices of autistic, and blind people, not to mention people with Down's Syndrome, and many more disabled voices to consider. Consult them before you vote on this bill that would surely have severe ramifications on the education of an already marginalized and subjugated community.

We ask that each Member on the Senate Education Committee support Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students rights and **vote NO on SB 692**.

Sincerely,

Kavita Pipalia, President
CAD Board

Email address: President@cad1906.org

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2021