

## Template for Physicians for Testimony

- Discuss that EI has been an effective system that works for the children and families that you have followed.
- Discuss your concern if drastic changes were made to eligibility. Eligibility has already been changed to requiring a 30% delay which for a 24 month child is a 7 month delay and for a child close to 3 years, almost a year delay.
- Offer your opposition to further changes beyond the current 30% delay and stating the impact both short and long term, on children not receiving help at the time when it is most effective. Eligibility changes that are being considered are requiring a 40% delay and 50% delay in expressive language. If increased to 40% delay, the 24 month child would need 9 month delay and at close to 3 years, would require 14 months of delay. Increase to the proposed 50% delay, would require a 12 month delay for children at 24 months and an 18 month delay for children as they approach 3. This would eliminate at least 1/3 of the children that are currently receiving services.
- Discuss the conflict that would exist for you as a physician as you recognize developmental delays and concerns, while at the same time knowing that early intervention would no longer be able to provide services for the child and family.
- Discuss that there is scientific evidence supporting the birth to 3-year-old period as the time which provides for the greatest benefit for positive outcomes from interventions.
- Discuss the long-term costs to tax payers in areas such as health, education, and public assistance services by not addressing developmental issues early when it would be the most efficient and could potentially eliminate the need or degree of services later on.
- Discuss the effect of increasing family fees approximately 700% of what they are contributing now and 1,333% for the families in the 301-400%FPG category) and the effect this would have on your families accessing early intervention services. (Some families would need to pay \$3,500 or more as a participation fee in addition to their increased costs of having a child with special needs.)
- Ask for the letter to be entered as testimony for the Early Intervention Part C hearing on proposed amendment to the Commonwealth's 23<sup>rd</sup> year grant under part C of public law IDEA.
- Send copies of the letter to:

1.)Governor Deval Patrick  
State House Room 360  
Boston, MA 02133

2.) Ron Benham  
Director, Bureau of Family Health  
250 Washington St.  
Boston, Ma. 02108

3.) Martha Levine  
MEIC President  
Cape Ann EI  
111 Dodge St.  
Beverly, Ma.01915

**\*\*Please note that in addition to sending the letters to the Governor and DPH, if you send a copy to the Ma. Early Intervention Consortium (MEIC), we could use your letter as we advocate with the Legislators as well. (Electronic copies preferred if possible to [Mlevine@ne-arc.org](mailto:Mlevine@ne-arc.org) )**