

## IMPORTANT SPECIAL EDUCATION ALERT

### **Call your State Representative NOW to Support S. 2692 (redraft of S.278) An Act to Improve Augmentative and Alternative Communication Opportunities for Children with Disabilities**

#### Summary of the Bill--

- **S. 2692** will help to ensure that teachers receive training in augmentative and alternative communication methods necessary to educate children with disabilities who are nonverbal or who have limited speech.
- This bill would require the revision of state regulations for educator licensure to ensure that all special education teachers, general education teachers and specialists receive coursework and practical experience in methods of augmentative and alternative communication.
- Thousands of children, who are nonverbal or have limited speech, including children with Autism Spectrum Disorders, cerebral palsy, and acquired brain injury, rely on augmentative and alternative communication methods to interact with others.
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication, or “AAC” includes methods of communication other than oral speech, such as pictorial language boards, eye tracking, facilitated communication, speech synthesizers or other electronic communication devices, that enhance or replace conventional forms of expressive and receptive communication.
- Use of AAC in general and special education settings leads to tremendous gains in academic, communication, social, and functional skills of students who are nonverbal or have limited speech. S.2692 will also help ensure access to the general education curriculum and facilitate inclusion.
- AAC assistive technology often remains unavailable or unused in a classroom because many teachers lack the training necessary to teach or use utilize these communication options.
- S.2692 passed the Senate in May. This bill must now pass the House to move forward and become law.

#### What you Can Do – ACT NOW: --Help this bill become law!

- **Call your state representative.** Tell your state representative that you are a parent of a child with a disability and that you support S. 2692. (617-722-2000 state house)
  - You can use the summary above to describe the bill.
  - Urge your representative to be sure this bill passes the House!
- AND**
- **Call House Ways and Means Chair Robert DeLeo** at 617-722-2990 and urge him to move S. 2692 out of House Ways and Means.

#### WHO IS YOUR STATE REPRESENTATIVE?

If you're not sure, go to **www.wheredoivotema.com**