



# MASSACHUSETTS ADVOCATES *for* CHILDREN

## ***An Act to Provide Equal Access to Evaluations for children with Disabilities S.58 – H.2866***

Lead Sponsors: Sen. Barbara L'Italien - Rep. Jim O'Day

This bill establishes reasonable rates for independent educational evaluations, which are critically important to ensure appropriate special education services for children with disabilities. Rates would have to be reviewed every three years and adjusted as necessary. In addition, the Bureau of Special Education Appeals would be able to order a higher rate in extraordinary cases. Special education laws give parents the right to request an independent education evaluation paid by the school district, but the rates set by the state for independent evaluations are so far below the rates customarily charged by evaluators that many low-income and middle-income parents cannot obtain an evaluation necessary to effectively participate in the development of appropriate special education services for their child.