

Open Letter to the California Senate Education Committee Members

April 21, 2015

Senator Carol Liu
Senator Loni Hancock
Senator Connie Leyva
Senator Marty Block
Senator Tony Mendoza
Senator Andy Vidak
Senator Sharon Runner
Senator Bill Monning
Senator Bob Huff (ex-Committee member)

Dear Senators on the Education Committee,

I was going to write to you outlining all the reasons why SB277 is a bad idea for California and our children and our already squeezed public education system to answer the great questions you had last week during the SB277 Hearing – those of you who were on the committee last week – but the more research I do on this bill the more I realize that it is all one big political game that is being played. It is not about the hundreds upon hundreds who turn up week after week opposing SB277, and who will be there tomorrow. It is all about financial and political gain of some of our senators. I hope you will show your abhorrence of this and stop this bill from going any further.

I ask if you really want to be associated and remembered as the Committee that changed your vote to Senator Richard Pan. Elections are in 18 months and your constituents will not be allowed to forget that you sided with such an unethical man. Here is what my research found:

If you watch the Education Hearing on SB277 from last week:

http://calchannel.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=7&clip_id=2742

At 31:39 a woman comes up to state her support for the bill introducing herself as “Jodi Hicks on behalf of the CA Academy of Family Physicians in support”.

Jodi Hicks works for DiMare, Brown, Hicks and Kessler (<http://www.lawpolicy.com/our-team/jodi-hicks>). According to DBKH website: “DBKH has garnered a reputation as one of the most trusted, effective lobbying firms in Sacramento. A word that is often used to describe us is “scrappy,” and we pride ourselves on touching almost every major policy debate under the Capitol dome. Our practice spans a broad range of issues given the diverse expertise of our team, and our successes have led to excellent working relationships with decision makers throughout state government. We commit ourselves to integrity, teamwork, and open communication while vigorously pursuing the interests of our clients.” If you look at DBKH’s list of clients, it includes a number of corporations that are backed by pharmaceutical companies.

The CA Academy of Family Physicians who Jodi Hicks claimed she worked for (but really does not, unless that is her client) has a PAC and look who is on their homepage picture

<http://www.familydocs.org/advocacy/fp-pac> - your very own Senator Richard Pan. Jodi Hicks was also seen earlier in the Hearing room speaking with Janus Norman. Janus Norman is a Vice President at the

California Medical Association and heads the CMA's state and federal government relations, as well as oversees political operations for the organization, including CALPAC.

<http://www.cmanet.org/news/press-detail/?article=california-medical-association-expands>

During the Education Committee debate on SB277 after the testimony was complete, at 3:32:54, Jodi Hicks and woman (Crystal Strait from Pan's office) and another man approach Senator Allen and whisper on the side while Pan tries to answer the committee's questions and also look over his shoulder at the conversation. At 3:33:54, Senator Allen heads up the stairs and whispers with the Education Committee Senators. Not 5 minutes later, Chairman Liu changes her tone changes and suggests tabling the vote until the following week, when we now know the committee would have changed and those opposing the vote would need 5 NOs, instead of the 4 needed last week.

Chairman Lui suggested pushing the vote out a week, Senator Pan and Allen did not just answer, but instead turned around and consulted with two people – Jodi Hicks and another man, after which Pan states that he will take the Vote only postponement. You can see this at 3:39:23.

Jodi Hicks advising Senators Pan and Senators Allen during the hearing is a violation of Chapter 6 of the Political Reform Act (Government Code Sections 86205). "No lobbying firm shall.... (c) Cause or influence the introduction of any bill or amendment thereto for the purpose of thereafter being employed to secure its passage or defeat.(d) Attempt to create a fictitious appearance of public favor or disfavor of any proposed legislative or administrative action or to cause any communication to be sent to any elected state officer, legislative official, agency official, or state candidate in the name of any fictitious person or in the name of any real person, except with the consent of such real person."

Here is the firm's filing http://cal-access.ss.ca.gov/PDFGen/pdfgen.prg?filingid=1922145&amendid=7&hc_location=ufi

It is now clearly obvious to me, and should be to you, that this bill has been put before the Senate not by Senator Pan and his concerned constituents, but by lobbyists. Lobbyists are illegally influencing this bill, even during the Education Committee hearing. This needs to be stopped NOW. I urge you to set up an investigation into this and stop this bill from going any further right now. And if it does come before a vote tomorrow that you will stick with the vote you expressed last week in the Education Committee Hearing (or for Senator Runner the vote you gave during AB2109), so that we hear a resounding NO on this bill.

Thank you for your attention to this.

Christina Hildebrand

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