Senator Robyn Kennedy, Chair September 9, 2025

Representative Jay Livingstone, Chair

Senator Liz Miranda, Vice Chair

Representative Judith Garcia, Vice Chair

Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities

Massachusetts State House

Boston, MA 02133

**Re: H.256 - An Act requiring universal changing stations in public buildings**

To the Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities,

My name is Raquel Quezada. I live in Haverhill, MA and I am a proud mother of a son who has a developmental disability and is diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy. Today I am testifying to highlight the importance of House Bill 256 - An Act requiring universal changing stations in public bathrooms.  I am a citizen member and the Chairperson of the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council (MDDC), where our mission is to provide opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities and families to enhance independence, productivity and inclusion.

This legislation is important because my son and others with disabilities should be able to access public spaces in their communities, and this bill will help ensure they have that access with available accessible public restrooms.

My son Schoan will be 20 years old in October.  Due to his Cerebral Palsy, he weighs 158 pounds. Schoan will continue to require full physical support as an adult with his activities of daily living – including toileting.  With the right supports, Schoan is living a meaningful and inclusive life.  He loves being active and visiting and exploring parks, theaters, museums, and other public places in the community with friends and family.

During the week as part of his public education services, Schoan is also in the community on a regular basis and visits a variety of public places, so he is prepared to live in the community as an adult. Access to the community is vital to living a meaningful and inclusive life to both people with and without disabilities.

Larger adults with disabilities like Schoan have a more difficult time being in the community because public restrooms don’t accommodate them.  Schoan uses a stroller, and universal changing stations would make using a public restroom easier, more hygienic, safe and would also ensure his privacy and dignity.

People without disabilities don’t have to worry about being able to access public restrooms, and this consideration of basic need is something my son and others with disabilities should also not have to worry about as they move throughout the community.

This legislation is an important step toward making our communities more accessible to all citizens.  Universal changing stations will allow greater community access to children and adults of all ages or disability that require full support in the restroom. Schoan and our family would appreciate your consideration!

Thank you,

Raquel Quezada