

To: Members of the Committee on Higher Education and Employment

My name is Beryl Kaufman and I am Executive Director of the Connecticut Association for Children & Adults with Learning Disabilities (CACLD) , a 48 year old non-profit organization based in Fairfield County. I am also a member of several other groups concerned about reading and literacy. I represent CACLD's 1000 members and friends as well as hundreds of parents and professionals who turn to us each year for information, guidance and support.

We believe the passage of Raised Bill No. 928 is critical if we are truly serious about turning the Achievement Gap around.

It has been clear to us for many years that reading is at the heart of the problem. Students attending our teacher training colleges and universities are not being trained appropriately to teach children (especially those with learning differences) to read. Why do children who attend private special ed schools learn to read after they have failed in the public schools? It is because the teachers in those schools have received the appropriate training required to reach and teach these challenging students. **They** are the kind of "highly qualified" teachers we say we want in our Connecticut Schools.

The problem is higher education and until that is addressed, we will continue having an Achievement Gap.

We know what to do and we know how to do it. Let's not delay any longer. We urge you to pass this bill and send a clear message that we are serious about closing the Achievement Gap.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our position.

Respectfully yours,
Beryl Kaufman
Executive Director

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