

**Learning House, LLC**

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March 4, 2012

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE TESTIMONY Re: Raised Bill No. 5350, An Act Concerning Achieving Universal Literacy by Grade Three**

Dear Members of the Education Committee:

I strongly recommend you pass Bill No. 53509. I know you are aware that Connecticut has the largest achievement gap between suburban and inner city schools than any other state in the nation and that our jails are full of individuals who have very low literacy abilities. This bill will help to close that gap and most likely decrease the number of inmates in our correction facilities.

For 40 years I have been a professional educator in schools and the director/owner of Learning House and have successfully taught students and trained teachers to teach low achieving students, individuals with dyslexia, and other learning disabilities to read and write using instructional practices that are based on scientific research. The topic of reading has been researched more than any other topic over the past 30 years, including medicine and the environment, with the same consistent findings about the essential components of reading instruction: phonological awareness, phonics/word study, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The United States was number one in world literacy and we are now reduced to number 38, proof that our current instructional practices for reading and writing are not working as well as they should.

Bill No. 53509 legislates Connecticut public schools to teach the literacy components that have been proven to work through research, as well as to provide professional development on best practices to administrators and teachers. The professional development contained in the bill is very important since these practices have not typically been included in courses that prepare educational professionals at any level in Connecticut colleges. I very strongly urge you to pass this very important legislation that can offer Connecticut children better futures not only in our state but within the global community.

Respectfully,

Susan Santora, M.S., F/AOGPE

Learning House Director

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