

## **Bill RHB 5562, Section 1, an Act Concerning Special Education**

**From Adam Glassman**

**Orange, Connecticut**

Hi. My name is Adam Glassman. I am ten years old. I live in Orange, Connecticut. I am here to speak in support of Bill RHB 5562, An Act Concerning Special Education to get dyslexia recognized in the State of Connecticut. Please make changes/additions to this bill to include early screening and identification of dyslexia, a check box on the IEP form for dyslexia and professional development for teachers about dyslexia.

I was diagnosed in kindergarten with a reading disability, after my mom brought me to a doctor but it wasn't until the end of third grade, when I went back to the doctor that I found out that I was dyslexic. Reading, spelling and writing have always been hard for me. Finding out that I was dyslexic helped me understand why I had so much trouble in school. I am really good at math and science. Also, I love building with Legos and working on my Cub Scout requirements.

My difficulty in reading started in the middle of kindergarten and. I started getting help from the reading teacher. In first grade, I continued to see the reading teacher. Now I was in a group with other children. Sometimes it felt like I was learning things I didn't need. There were things we would do in reading group that were too easy for me. In the middle of first grade I started to go to the resource room. I still went to the reading teacher too. The resource room is a tiny room with up to ten kids in there at a time. The kids are working on reading, writing and math. Sometimes the room is noisy and it is hard to concentrate. I like going to a quiet space to work and take tests. I concentrate better when it is quiet. I always felt like my friends were reading better than me. My reading level wasn't improving enough to read the same books as my friends.

Teachers don't understand dyslexia. Teachers have called me lazy. Sometimes I work slower than my friends, when I do my school work. I am really good at math. It is really easy but it takes me extra time to get my work done. The teachers put me in math groups for extra help because they don't understand the way I work. I am put with kids who don't understand math. One time I had to work on counting with blocks. I knew how to count, but they still made me sit there and count. I have creative ways to figure out math. I couldn't memorize the nine times table, so I multiply the number by 10 and then I subtract to get my answer. It works for me, but I had a teacher tell me I was doing it wrong. I did get the right answer though. Sometimes teachers have told not to use my fingers too, but I need to use them to my work done. I wish teachers understood the way I think.

Writing is hard for me too. The ideas are in my head but it is hard to write them down. Sometimes I have an idea in my head, but when I pick up my pencil, the thought goes away. My teachers don't realize some of the tricks I have used to keep up with my friends. In kindergarten through the middle of second grade I had trouble remembering how to write my letters. I would use the letter line on my desk to help me form my letters. Teachers thought I knew how to how to write letters, but they were wrong. All they knew is that it took me longer to do my work.

My mom had to fight to get me the help I need at school. Since the summer I have been working with an Orton Gillingham tutor. We work on the spelling and reading that I need. Since she is working with just me and we are able to work at my pace, I don't have to worry about other kids in a group. I wish she worked with me before fourth grade because maybe I would have caught up sooner. My tutor understands me. She knows about dyslexia. Sometimes she will teach me tricks to remember things. Even though we work on reading, she has helped me at times with little tricks for remembering math facts too.

Since February, I have had an iPad from the school and access to Learning Ally. Learning Ally is an app that reads books to me. I can comprehend books way above my reading level. It used to take me about a month to read a chapter book. Those books were way below my grade level. Most of the time I would choose picture books to read because they were easier. Now I am reading a chapter book in two days. I use my ears and eyes to read the books. These books are above my grade level. Now I love reading chapter books. My fourth grade teacher doesn't understand the way I read. She tells me to check out chapter books from the library. She doesn't understand that I am reading my chapter books on the iPad. She insists that I read paper books like my friends.

All dyslexic kids should have the chance to get the right teaching earlier in school and have an iPad so they can read like their friends. Please help me and other kids like me by helping to pass Bill RHB 5562, An Act Concerning Special Education. Dyslexia needs to be recognized and teachers should have the proper training, so they can help kids like me.