

Mr Chairman, Senators, Representatives and Guests.

I'd like to express my support for bill HB5562 recognizing Dyslexia as a disability in our public schools. Identification and intervention for children with dyslexia is critical to success of their education. With a clearer understanding of dyslexia, teachers and administrators in our Public Schools will be able to identify early on these beautiful minds and educate them appropriately, after all one in five students are most likely dyslexic.

The lack of knowledge and intervention serious problem, for example here's our story....

Our son Joey is dyslexic. For years my husband Joe and I worked with our local schools trying desperately to assist Joey with his academic struggles. In 7th grade we were told our son Joey, who had been always a respectful, hard working student was now a disciplinary problem. Out of sheer frustration, we had Joey privately tested, the results were devastating and disturbing. Joey had somehow made it through 6 years of education, with reading and decoding levels that were beyond unacceptable, all the while working hard and honestly having glowing reviews on his determination and persistence. In the 7th grade, Joey was reading on a 3rd grade level and decoding on a Kindergarten level, and diagnosed with severe dyslexia. Clearly the public education system had failed him. Imagine our surprise when we were told by our school that this was not a recognized disability! Joey with intense work has made great strides, he's a sophomore in high school and reading on a 7th grade level. He has made great sacrifices to get there, Joey hasn't had a summer vacation for three years. While his friends are enjoying the lazy days of summer he's attending classes times a week, working to learn what he missed for years. He stays after school two days a week adding two hours to his school day and an additional two days a week he is in private tutoring adding minimally three hours to his school day.

I am beyond proud of our son. Joey is an amazing example of the brilliance found in the dyslexic mind. He has an above average IQ, his mechanical aptitude is inspiring and he is incredibly preceptive. I'd be remiss in not acknowledging his amazing work ethic and his ability to empathize with others struggling with their education. Hence his determination to be here today to share his story with you.

HB5562 offers assistance that so many children will benefit from, these beautiful minds are our future, I ask you to support this bill.

Sincerely

Lisa Davenport

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