

Statement in Favor of Senate Bill 1054, **An Act Concerning Students with Dyslexia**

In a prior CT Education Committee hearing about dyslexia, a question was raised about the long range implications of not getting help for reading difficulties. Here are a few answers paraphrased from several adult dyslexic men:

- Not being able to read is like trying to walk on one leg.
- The thing I want most is to have a family, and I've dated some very nice women, but eventually I end the relationships because I can't bear to tell them that I can't read.
- I don't have a checking account because it's too hard to write out the checks.
- You wouldn't believe the awful stuff I've had to eat because I couldn't read the menu, so I would order the restaurant "special."

The ramifications of not being able to read are life-long and affect many areas. Imagine not being able to read job applications, road signs, information about medication, e-mails from your child's school, instruction manuals for appliances and motor vehicles, and financial contracts you are expected to sign.

As a reading tutor of dyslexic students for the past 25 years, I have seen over and over again the price children pay for having reading difficulties. They lose confidence in themselves and come to believe they are stupid. Dyslexia is a reading problem, not an issue of intelligence. In fact, I have worked with several students who were identified through professional evaluations as gifted and dyslexic. However, young students don't make that distinction. They just know that they struggle and their progress is very slow. With appropriate evidence-based instruction designed to remediate dyslexia, these struggling students can learn to read.

I support the passage of this bill, and encourage the incorporation of more extensive requirements for teacher-training. An in-service may enhance staff awareness of dyslexia, but a full course of evidence-based teacher instruction is needed for teaching dyslexic children to read. Please amend this bill to require that dyslexic students be taught using appropriate evidenced-based instructional methods by teachers who are trained to use the methods.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Rickey
AOGPE certified instructor
Southbury, CT