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Written Testimony Against SB 317 – An Act Concerning Dyslexia

To Members of the Education Committee:

I am an education advocate who has 14 years' experience working on behalf of hundreds of children with disabilities throughout the state, including many with dyslexia. I also previously served as President of the Learning Disabilities Association of Connecticut.

On first read, SB 317 sounds as though it might be helpful. After all, shouldn't any person applying for a remedial reading, remedial language arts or reading consultant endorsement have taken at least one course in dyslexia?

The problem is that that is not what the bill really means. The bill, if passed, would mean that the State of Connecticut is asserting that one course is sufficient preparation for school staff who teach reading to children with dyslexia. Research tells us that this is nowhere near sufficient and will actually make it much harder for parents to obtain appropriate reading instruction for their children. Because school districts will point to the state standards and say, "See, our reading consultant with this minimal training is qualified to teach your child."

Yes, certification requirements for the specialists teaching reading to students with dyslexia need revision. But to ensure we are helping, not harming children, we need to make the right revisions.

For more information about what type of education would be effective, please see the *Knowledge and Practice Standards For Teachers of Reading* from the International Dyslexia Association (IDA), which is found here: <http://eida.org/knowledge-and-practices/>

If you have any questions, please email or call me. My cell is (860) 992-5874. Thank you for your attention!

