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To: Edtestimony@cga.ct.gov

Subject: Senate Bill No. 317

Dear State of Connecticut Legislators:

This is my written testimony regarding SB No. 317; I will not be testifying at the hearing.

I am in support of SB 317, An Act Concerning Dyslexia, but I am advocating an amendment to the language that states candidates seeking a remedial reading endorsement complete a graduate level program aligned with evidence-based practices and the International Dyslexia Association Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading.

Why is this additional language important? Simply put: teachers can't teach what they don't know. A single course about dyslexia is not sufficient to acquire the depth and breadth of knowledge necessary to teach all students to read. The current proposal is analogous to a medical doctor learning about symptoms of a disease, but never learning how to treat it with a safe and successful outcome. Teacher preparation must include two key components: (1) Teachers must be equipped with the content in the Knowledge and Practice Standards. This arms them with the "what to teach." And (2) teachers must be prepared and demonstrate their ability to put this knowledge into practice. This equips them with the "how to teach." In short, the proposed amendment to the language in this bill would place the much-needed emphasis on what teachers need to know and be able to do to teach all students to read, including those who struggle.

Qualified practitioners continue to be at the heart of the solution for this compelling and chronic educational problem; this proposed legislation can help to ensure that Connecticut institutions of higher education produce the caliber of teachers that are required. Changes in the content, intensity, and fidelity of instructional practice must be the areas of emphasis if we are to address this need successfully.

Thank you for your consideration of this perspective. The success of those professionals charged with maximizing literacy acquisition for all of our students rests in your hands. By expanding the requirements of this bill, you also have the opportunity to change the literacy outcomes for many children in our state.

Most sincerely,

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