

This is my written testimony and I will not be testifying at the hearing.

Co-Chairs Senator Boucher, Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann, Representative Lavielle and distinguished members of the Education Committee. My name is Paula Carl, I live in Barkhamsted, Connecticut. I fully support HB7254 An Act Requiring Special Education Teachers to complete a Program of Study in Evidence-Based Structured Literacy Interventions for Students with Dyslexia.

My grandson, Nicholas Carl, was diagnosed with Dyslexia several years ago. From first grade through third grade his parents worked with the school system to set up the extra help for reading etc. that was available in our local system. Despite coming up with plans for extra help that was available in the local school system, he fell farther and farther behind and he knew it. I cannot tell you what it felt like to see this child get off the school bus day after day with his head hanging and a totally defeated disposition. Try to imagine how you would feel if you watched your child or grandchild go through this when you knew there was help available but the training was lacking. If a child can't read they will struggle for the rest of their life.

As a result of the CT public schools inability to provide proper training for Nick, he had to be enrolled in an out of state school that does teach for Dyslexia students. As a grandparent I saw a remarkable difference with Nicholas after only a couple of months. We saw him start reading signs, restaurant menus, his school books etc. In addition his entire demeanor changed. When asked how his day at school was he always answered "Great!".

I am optimistic that the lawmakers for the State of Connecticut will support and continue to ensure the best possible education for all children, including those with Dyslexia. I support HB7254 as it aligns teacher preparation for special educators with evidence based structured literacy, along with a requirement for supervised practicum hours which is critical. I support HB7254 which allows special education teachers to receive Dyslexia training a pre-service teacher candidates, before they graduate and reach our local school districts. I support HB7254 as it is essential to meet the critical needs of students with Dyslexia.