



Good Afternoon Co-Chairs: Senator Boucher, Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann, Representative Lavielle and other members of the Education Committee. My name is Kelly Howard, I live in New Hartford, Connecticut. I am in support House Bill 7254: An Act Requiring Special Education Teachers to Complete a Program of Study in Evidence-Based Structured Literacy Interventions for Students with Dyslexia.

Our Special Education Teachers should receive the required training that will support all struggling readers. HB 7254 calls for a "Program of Study" in Dyslexia, for Special Educators within Institutes of Higher Education, which is needed. I was amazed to find out this was not already a requirement. Districts should not have to pay for this training, this should be taught in college.

HB 7254 aligns teacher preparation for special educators with evidence-based structured literacy, along with a requirement for supervised practicum hours, which is critical. This has been proven to work with Dyslexic students and all struggling readers.

HB 7254 will allow special Education teachers to receive Dyslexia training as pre-service teacher candidates, before they graduate and reach our local school districts. HB 7254 is essential to meet the critical needs of students with Dyslexia.

My daughter Zoey Howard has Dyslexia. She is a fraternal twin. Zoey currently attends The Kildonan School in Amenia NY. I have had to separate her from her twin sister Katie Howard and all her friends to put her in a school over an hour away to get the services she needs. All of the teacher at The Kildonan School are trained in OG, they all are trained on Dyslexia. Every child that attend Kildonan has Dyslexia.

It has been a great personal sacrifice to place Zoey at Kildonan. Our family is committed to Zoey's education. We should not have to drive over an hour each way to take her to a school where she can get the interventions she needs, all the teachers at Kildonan are trained to work with Dyslexic children.

We have the resources right here in Connecticut. We have leading researchers here at Haskins Lab and Yale University why aren't we utilizing those resources? Special Education teachers need a program of study in Dyslexia within Higher Education.

As a resident in the State of Connecticut, I request your support of the Dyslexia legislation as it is stated in HB 7254.

Respectfully,
Kelly Howard
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