

March 14, 2017

Written Testimony in Support of HB 7254, I will not be testifying at the hearing

My name is Brenna Jaskiewicz, I live in Oakdale, Connecticut. I fully support HB 7254, An Act Requiring Special Education Teachers to Complete a Program of Study in Evidence-Based Structured Literacy Interventions for Students with Dyslexia.

I noticed in her Kindergarten year that my otherwise bright daughter had unexpected reading difficulty. Extensive school district testing yielded NO diagnosis or suggestions. Finally, in 9th grade I hired a private neuropsychologist who discovered & diagnosed Stephanie's dyslexia and gave specific recommendations for reasonable accommodations in school, such as extended time to complete tests and the use of books on audio. Some people think that extra time or audio books are 'cheating'. This is just not true. Since dyslexic students tend to have an above average IQ, they typically have the ability to comprehend and evaluate the material but have a difficult time decoding printed words and putting their thoughts down on paper. The audio books and extra time can allow him/her to demonstrate his/her true level of ability.

Early identification of dyslexia and the use of evidence-based interventions are essential. I do not want other parents and children to go through the years of strife that Stephanie and I did. It was a constant struggle to not let Stephanie become too depressed and insecure as many dyslexic children do when not given appropriate instruction and accommodations.

Due to Stephanie's native intelligence, and through my own research and persistent efforts on both Stephanie's and my parts, Stephanie has done very well in school. Currently, as a college student, her studies at UCONN take a great deal out of her; she needs to take double or triple the time to read and study as her peers, but she has always had to work harder; so she does whatever it takes. **The path for our families does not have to be so difficult and exhausting.** Thank God I had the time, patience, intelligence and resources to help Stephanie. I can only imagine the tragic results that other families endure who may not have the same resources I did.

A Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity study indicated that 1 in 5 people are affected by dyslexia. Some children and adults never know they have dyslexia and therefore go through life feeling stupid and have low self-esteem. This needs to stop!

SUPPORT - HB 7254 as it is essential to meet the critical needs of students with Dyslexia.

Brenna Jaskiewicz, Oakdale, Conn.