

To the Connecticut Education Committee:

March 14, 2017

RE: 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, Joanne Lussier, am an educator and parent of a dyslexic student living in Wilton, Ct. I am submitting this document as my written testimony in full support of HB 7254, An Act Requiring Special Education teachers to complete a Program of Study in Evidence- Based Structured Literacy Interventions for Students with Dyslexia.

It is necessary that Special Education Teachers receive a program of study in Evidence Based Structured Literacy within Higher Education so that they can come to our school districts ready to teach and intervene with struggling students effectively. Our students need trained and qualified teachers so they have the opportunity to achieve literacy and begin to close the achievement gap. Presently, districts bear the financial burden of finding a way to provide this necessary training that can take years for a Special Education Teacher to complete while working full time. Districts do not have enough trained staff to properly support the growing population of students that are in need of intervention. This leads to overcrowding of students in the resource rooms and a lack of fidelity in the delivery of evidence based interventions. When intervention is not delivered appropriately with fidelity, our students suffer and fall further and further behind, thus contributing to an increasing achievement gap across all districts. We know that our dyslexic students can achieve and succeed if provided with the appropriate evidence based structured literacy interventions. Please pass HB 7254 to support our Special Education Teachers and our students.

Respectfully,
Joanne Lussier