

**Chairmen Boucher, Slossberg, Fleischmann and Ranking Member Lavielle,**

**My name is Margarita Zimmerman, I live in Darien, Connecticut. I fully support HB 7254.**

**My son is dyslexic. He is also a very bright 4th grader. His school denied testing him for a learning disability even though he was not able to write. Besides his first name, he could not consistently spell any word, including his last name. To this day he relies on a rap to spell out his last name in order to spell it correctly.**

**His teachers and specialists at his school were not trained to detect his disability. He was able to compensate because he is so bright but it eventually caught up with him. He can also read pretty well up to a certain level but then starts making up words especially when it comes to multi syllable words.**

**He was only tested and admitted into special education after I brought in an advocate. After his testing it was clear he had a disability. We lost years of remediation because of the school's negligence. This is valuable time and potential progress he can never get back. The school should have caught his struggles early on when they saw he could not form letters or write.**

**I urge you to pass this bill. We need it to detect disabilities and to train teachers how to teach kids how to read and write. My son currently writes at about a 1st or 2nd grade level. I don't know how he is going to get through the upper grades with his deficiencies in writing and spelling.**

**Thank you for hearing/reading my testimony in support of HB 7254 An Act Requiring Special Education Teachers to Complete A Program of Study in Evidenced Based Structured Literacy.**