



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
House of Representatives
State House, Boston 02133-1020

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July 11, 2017

The Honorable Sonia Chang-Diaz, Chair
The Honorable Alice H. Peisch, Chair
Joint Committee on Education
State House, Room 473G
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chairwoman ^{Sonia} Chang-Diaz and Chairwoman ^{Alice} Peisch:

Due to a scheduling conflict, I was unable to appear at today's hearing to testify in favor of H330, *An Act relative to defining and providing screening for dyslexia*, and H2872, *An Act relative to dyslexia*.

This legislation will change, and therefore improve, the current definition of a "Neurological Learning Disability" to the most recent definition set forth by the National Institute of Health; this bill would thus allow the issuing and development of district guidelines and targeted screening procedures for students with indicators of a neurological learning disability, most commonly dyslexia.

Dyslexia symptoms affect as much as 20% of the nation's population and within the school community almost 14% of the elementary and secondary education populations have conditions that qualify them for special education. However, with proper screening that is provided early enough in a child's education, dyslexia and other neurological learning disabilities can be found and diagnosed and then the child can be provided the proper educational resources and tools to allow them to succeed in the school setting and in the world at large. An early diagnosis of and special attention to a neurological learning disability is vital to a child's well-being in the classroom setting as well as their ability to later remain on the same grounding as their peers, as the attached testimony from my constituents, Andrea and Pasqualino Pannone, will show you.

I would, therefore, urge that you look into these concerns and please report these bills favorably to the General Court, and encourage you to contact me if I may be of any further assistance in the consideration of these bills.

With warmest personal regards, I remain
Sincerely,

LOUIS L. KAFKA
State Representative



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