



LOYOLA UNIVERSITY MARYLAND

Department of Speech-Language-
Hearing Sciences

— 1852 —

February 17, 2021

House Ways & Means Committee
Hon. Anne R Kaiser, Chair
House Office Building, Room 131
6 Bladen St. Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support - HB 1271: Student Evaluation – Identification of Traumatic Brain Injury

Dear Chairman Kaiser and Members of the House Ways and Means Committee:

I am Dr. Lisa Schoenbrodt, Professor of Speech Language Pathology and former Chair of the Department of Speech-Language-Hearing Sciences at Loyola University of Maryland and co-owner of LeadAbility LLC. I have been at Loyola for 29 years and also continued to provide direct services in speech-language pathology in my private practice where I have practiced as certified speech language pathologist (SLP) for 35 years. Prior to this time, I worked in Howard County public schools as a speech language pathologist for children and adolescents in elementary, middle, and high school. In my position as a Full Professor, I provide instruction for undergraduate and graduate students in training to become speech language pathologists. Many of the classes that I teach prepare students particularly in working with children and adolescents with traumatic brain injury. In addition, I have published several articles, edited 2 books, and written chapters in several books about communication disorders and educational challenges of children and adolescents with TBI. I am an active member of the American Speech Language Hearing Association and am a Distinguished Practitioner Fellow of the National Academy of Practice in Speech Language Pathology. I am also a member of the State Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Advisory Board.

I am speaking in support of House Bill 1271 Student Evaluation-Identification of Traumatic Brain Injury. This bill is one that is very important in speaking to the gaps in identification of students with traumatic brain injury. These gaps are critical in providing appropriate educational and support services for children with mild TBI's that often times are not identified by a health care provider. These gaps are supported by a recent report of the CDC who identify a "growing body of research that indicates that many students with mild TBI without proper identification and provision of services, have poor outcomes for college and career". One study particularly cited only half of students with TBI who had been out of school for a year had paying jobs outside the home. In addition, studies show lower rates of enrollment for postsecondary enrollment for these same students. Evidence based studies show that the effects of TBI can be chronic and disabling. Further, TBI of any severity can negatively impact a child's future ability to learn and perform in school. Changes in thinking, memory, communication, problem-solving, and behavior are common. More recent studies show particular difficulties in social skills, social language use, social problem-solving, and emotional perception. These deficits support the numbers of individuals shown to need long-term assistance and possible substance abuse, as well as incarceration and homelessness.

The addition of the certain questions that can be included in consultation with the State Department of Education is critical in closing the gap by identifying students with TBI and getting them the appropriate educational and support services. The TBI Advisory Board will work cooperatively with the State Department of Education in determining the exact working of the questions and ways to disseminate and review the data. Proper identification and service provision will lead to an increase in the number of students being prepared to enter post-secondary institutions and managing the demands of a career, which will further lead to being independent in adult years.

Thank you for your consideration of this critical and important legislation. I respectfully ask that you give HB1271 a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisa Schoenbrodt, Ed.D.".

Lisa Schoenbrodt, Ed.D., CCC-SLP
Professor/ Co-owner LeadAbility LLC
Loyola University in Maryland
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