

Mr. Richard Ceruolo
HB 725
Maryland House of Delegates
House Ways and Means Committee
6 Bladen St.
Annapolis, MD. 21401
Testimony in Support of HB 725

February 5, 2020

Education – Public Schools – Instruction in Print and Cursive Handwriting - Dyslexia

Hello and good day.

I wish to communicate my support of the Dyslexia bills being proposed this legislative session; HB 725. Its estimated that as many as 43.5 million Americans have Dyslexia. Reading is fundamental to learning and tied directly to a student's future success. Writing, especially cursive, is a helpful skill for students as they learn to read. It assists them with the development of memory; seeing words, forming words, committing them to memory, and helps to build on their abilities to recall and use them.

I am the parent of a child with multiple challenges and disabilities. And I am also now an advocate for children with disabilities. Dyslexia is hereditary and multi-generational in my family and in so many others across our nation and world. My brother, my Dad, oldest son and myself are just a small sampling of citizens that wrestle with Dyslexia's challenges every day.

Reading and writing are pieces of the same cornerstone of education. Without the ability to read or write, students cannot progress and learn effectively in an education setting. Their future success hinges on developing the ability to read and to write legibly.

Therefore, I fully support the teaching and development of legible handwriting by the end of 3rd grade and legible handwriting in cursive by the end of 5th grade.

As a member of Decoding Dyslexia of Maryland and Parent Advocacy Consortium, I know that organizations like ours have a treasure trove of peer reviewed, science-based research, and experience to share. We would be pleased to provide this vast knowledge with the House Ways and Means Committee, The House of Delegates, The Maryland Senate as needed.

Please return a favorable report and move forward with HB 725 so that local school districts will be tasked with developing handwriting skills for all of Maryland's school children, with and without dyslexia across the entire state.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony.

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