

Testimony – Written **in favor of HB 724 Special Education Prolonged School Closure**

Thank you for reviewing the following written testimony requesting a favorable report of this bill.

My son is 20 turning 21 this June. He is considered a transitioning youth and will age out of school in June. He receives special education services due to his diagnosis of Down Syndrome, Autism and other learning disabilities. He has not been able to attend in person school since March 2020 due to Covid-19 shuttering schools. This has been the majority (or all depending on when schools will open) of his last school year. He has not been able to have the socialization that he needs and receives so successfully while he is in school. Once school ends he will transition to a day program which he will be in for a significant period of time.

By passing HB724 my son and those like him, will be able to retain the benefits of school socialization and education that they have largely lost during 2020 and beyond. While he has attempted to participate in on line school this has not been nearly as successful for him as in person learning and being with his peers.

Thank you again for considering this matter and taking into account the time lost by those students who would otherwise be transitioning out of the special education school setting.



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