



## **Decoding Dyslexia Maryland (DD-MD) ~ Identify, Educate & Support Students with**

Dyslexia

House Ways and Means Committee

House Bill 278: Task Force to Study Implementation of a Dyslexia Education Program

February 18, 2015

Position: Support

My name is Laura Schultz and I represent Decoding Dyslexia Maryland (DD-MD) – a grassroots movement that includes teachers, parents, students and professionals from across the state. We are concerned that capable students are not learning to read, despite their ability.

My daughter Catherine attends ninth-grade at a public-school in Maryland and we are a fortunate family. She was identified with dyslexia in 3rd grade while we were stationed in Northern Virginia and our pediatrician recommended an evidence-based intervention provided by a well trained language therapist/instructor. Instead, she was placed in a special day class for students with severe learning problems and behavioral issues.

We moved back to Maryland when she was in 5th grade and were hopeful she would receive an appropriate intervention. After two years of no progress, our school agreed to use a dyslexia intervention without investing in the training and professional development needed to get results.

Members of the committee, many students with the same learning profile as my daughter are not getting the instruction they need. **Many teachers, through no fault of their own, are not getting the effective instruction they need to teach struggling readers.**

A teacher member of our group says it best: “Maryland can no longer afford to have teachers who aren’t prepared to teach students with dyslexia--teachers need to truly understand the structure of English and the necessary practices that make all students successful.”

Decoding Dyslexia Maryland supports HB 278 because it will create a collaborative effort to study and make recommendations on how to best educate students with reading struggles like dyslexia. Decoding Dyslexia would like to be part of this collaborative effort and be included on the Task Force to represent parents and students with dyslexia.

Decoding Dyslexia is also part of a national parent network active in 50 states. Locally we are working on a dyslexia pilot. We hope to see you all again next month for Dyslexia Advocacy Day on March 18th to thank you for passage of this legislation.

Thank you,  
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