

Good afternoon Chair Pavlov and Senate Education Committee members.

My name is Terra Walters, I am a founding member of Decoding Dyslexia MI. I am a parent of 3 children.

We are grateful that the topic of changing Michigan's literacy outcomes has been in the forefront for the past two and a half years. As parents of children that represent the highest percent of the struggling reader category, we are fully aware of the consequences of not fixing the literacy crisis. We are also fully aware of how schools in Michigan and across the country are wholly unprepared to address the needs of those with dyslexia.

In the Senate version of HB4822, we welcome the addition of the Parent/Legal Guardian good cause exemption. The parent component is necessary. Every parent or legal guardian in Michigan should have the right to do what they know is best for THEIR child. During testimony last week, it was suggested that the Parent Good Cause exemption be eliminated. We disagree.

As written, the bill does nothing to require the school leadership to address the dyslexia action gap (as laws in other states do), as long as you are not requiring schools to specifically identify and intervene for "dyslexia" in the pre-k/kindergarten window, retention is punitive not corrective for our kids and you are again leaving dyslexia squarely in the parent's lap....and as such, parents should have equal input in how their child is handled in school. Children with dyslexia can be accommodated with assistive technology while they are being remediated. The last thing they <sup>don't</sup> need is more stress and humiliation. Retention doesn't teach them to read. Prompt, proven intervention does.

Without that clause, we will not support this legislation. By removing that you are removing the right of the parent or legal guardian. We are thankful for the addition of that clause in the Senate, we hope that you continue to stand with the right of the parent / legal guardian.

Thank you for your time.