

**SCR 110**

**Testimony**

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LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU  
State of Hawaii  
State Capitol  
415 S. Beretania Street, Room 446  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

## Written Comments

### SCR110, SD1

## REQUESTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO IMPROVE AWARENESS OF AND STRENGTHEN SUPPORT FOR PERSONS WITH DYSLEXIA

Comments by the Legislative Reference Bureau  
Ken H. Takayama, Director

Presented to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Wednesday, April 7, 2010, 9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 211

Chair Kim and Members of the Committee:

Thank you very much for this opportunity to submit comments on Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 110, S.D. 1, concerning awareness of and support for persons with dyslexia.

The Legislative Reference Bureau (Bureau) takes **no position** either for or against the measure, but submits the following comments and concerns:

1. As always, if the Legislature wants us to undertake this project, we will do it to the best of our ability with the resources we have.
2. The Resolution requests the Department of Education and the University of Hawaii to establish a working group to develop a comprehensive plan to improve awareness of and strengthen support for persons with dyslexia.
3. The Bureau is requested (in the sixth "Resolved" clause) to "provide legislative drafting services for the working group."
4. While the project requested of the Bureau by this particular measure appears in and of itself to be manageable, we are concerned about the cumulative effect of passage of a number of similar measures.

5. Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 110, S.D. 1, is one of approximately a dozen vehicles still "alive" that request the Bureau to draft proposed legislation (and often "recommendations" in addition) for a task force, working group, or other entity. These measures are **in addition** to the usual complement of measures requesting studies.
6. We anticipate that many of these entities, left to their own devices, will not be formulating their proposed legislation until December or January, thus coinciding with the period of the Bureau's heaviest workload in terms of responding to requests for bills and other work from legislators in preparation for the 2011 session.
7. In view of the foregoing, we request that Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 110, S.D. 1, be amended to request the working group to transmit its intended proposed legislation to the Bureau not later than November 1, 2010. This could be accomplished by amending the sixth "Resolved" clause as follows:

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is requested to provide administrative support for the working group, and the Legislative Reference Bureau is requested to provide legislative drafting services for the working group; *provided that the working group is requested to submit its proposals for legislation to the Legislative Reference Bureau for drafting not later than November 1, 2010.*

8. We believe that this amendment will help to ensure that the working group's report is submitted to the Legislature in a timely manner.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to submit comments.



**Assets School**  
*Learning that transforms lives*

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*Principal, 9-12*



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March 16, 2010

VIA EMAIL  
WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

Decision Making - Senate Ways and Means Committee  
April 7, 2010; 9:30 a.m.

RE: Testimony in Support of S.C.R. 110

Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in support of S.C.R. 110. As the K-8 Principal of Assets School, I work directly with students and families who are impacted by dyslexia. There are countless more such students and families who struggle without the benefit of a supportive school environment, or whose school simply lacks the expertise and means to provide appropriate, effective instruction. Much is now known about early intervention, research based instruction, and effective progress monitoring.

I commend the legislature for this bill, which will bring attention to, and information about, dyslexia to a wider population, and convene a working group for the benefit of all.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Jyo Bridgewater Borg  
K-8 Principal  
Assets School

jborg@assets-school.net  
808-440-3617

*Serving gifted and/or dyslexic learners*

**From:** [Margarette](#)  
**To:** [WAM Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of S.C.R.110  
**Date:** Monday, April 05, 2010 9:12:55 PM  
**Importance:** High

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Aloha Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee,

I am a Native Hawaiian woman who overcame my dyslexia and founded the Dyslexia Tutoring Center of Hawaii, Inc. (DTCH), a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization located in 'Ewa Beach, Hawai'i.

Discovering people can succeed despite their dyslexia was enough of an inspiration for me to open DTCH. The core of the services offered at DTCH lie in improving a child's socio-emotional development by strengthening their self-worth and tapping into the schools, communities and families to achieve this. As a result of my service to the communities within the State of Hawai'i, I was one of five individuals that recently received the 2009 Jefferson Award (men and women, recognized for their selfless dedication to community service), 2008 KOA Award winner for Education, and the 2009 Community Service Award from the National Society Daughters of American Revolution.

I am in support of S.C.R. No. 110, have been a strong advocate for myself and my children within the dyslexia realm for many years, and made it part of my mission to raise awareness on dyslexia throughout the State of Hawai'i. The development, outcome, and data gathered during this "Working Group" can provide valuable information and support for the educators, parents, students, and professionals in our State. I feel that we need to find "key" people to raise awareness of dyslexia in the right way. **It is crucial to find experts in the field of dyslexia that hold certifications in the areas of assessments and identification of dyslexia, remedial curricula, and accommodations that address these needs.**

Through the eyes of my children, students, parents, and the community, I would like to share with you a quote of mine:

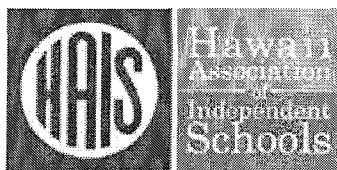
*"Education is so important for all of us! We all learn differently and are unique in our own special way. Unfortunately, our society is quick to judge us on our weaknesses instead of praising us for our strengths. This could "make or break" a child as they are growing up and effect their self-esteem through adulthood. Taking the time to look through the eyes of another is not much to ask, understanding them could make all the difference in the world, having compassion is rare.....To know me is to love me, not to hurt, abuse, or judge me.....I am Margarette Pegi Minicola Pang and I am dyslexic."*

**Mahalo Nui Loa!**

Margarette P.M. Pang  
Founder and Executive Director

**Dyslexia Tutoring Center of Hawaii, Inc. (DTCH)**

A non-profit organization 501 c 3  
91-2135 Fort Weaver Road  
Clinical Services Center, Suite 180



April 7, 2010  
9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 211

TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE  
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

RE: SCR 110, SD1 – Requesting the Establishment of a Working Group to Develop a Comprehensive Plan to Improve Awareness of and Strengthen Support for Persons with Dyslexia

Chair Kim, Vice Chair Tsutsui and Members of the Committee:

My name is Robert Witt and I am executive director of the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS), which represents 99 private and independent schools in Hawaii and educates over 33,000 elementary and secondary students statewide.

The Association is in strong support of Senate Concurrent Resolution 110, SD1, which requests the establishment of a working group to develop a comprehensive plan to improve awareness of and strengthen support for persons with dyslexia.

Dyslexia affects more children in our State than all the other, more visible and well-known childhood conditions and physical challenges combined. Early identification and appropriate instruction are absolutely essential for addressing this significant educational issue.

The establishment of a working group will be an unprecedented and a much needed major step toward greater awareness and a coordinated statewide plan to enhance learning and improve the lives of intellectually capable individuals whose learning is hampered by dyslexia.

HAIS would be pleased to have a representative of our organization serve on the proposed task force and would welcome the opportunity to assist in developing a comprehensive policy to improve awareness and strengthen support for persons with dyslexia, and to assist in developing a comprehensive plan to make training available to educators in the state.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



*Promoting literacy through research, education, and advocacy*

Hawai'i Branch - HIDA

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**Before the Senate Ways and Means Committee**

**DATE:** Wednesday, April 7, 2010  
**TIME:** 9:30 AM  
**PLACE:** Conference Room 211

**Re: S.C.R. 110**

**Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:**

I am the president of the Hawai'i Branch of the International Dyslexia Association ("HIDA"), a Hawai'i non-profit corporation. HIDA's mission is to increase awareness of dyslexia in the community, provide support for dyslexics, families and educators, promote teacher training and improve literacy for struggling readers throughout Hawai'i.

HIDA submits this testimony in support of S.C.R. 110.

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition, and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological (sound manipulation) component of language. Despite adequate intelligence, students with dyslexia struggle with many or all facets of learning to read, spell, and write. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede the growth of vocabulary and background knowledge. As they struggle in school, students may develop self-esteem issues.

Children with dyslexia either cannot learn, or have great difficulty learning, to read with teaching methods used in most classrooms today. They can, however, learn if instruction includes the elements contemplated in S.C.R. 110 – e.g., early assessment, tiered continuum of intensity for intervention based on a response to intervention model, evidence-based progress monitoring, research-based interventions consistent with the guidelines of the Partnership for Reading, etc. Effective interventions have turned failing students into successful students.

President Obama's latest education initiative is to keep students engaged in learning, to use data to identify students at risk of failure, and to help them transition to high school and college. S.C.R. 110 specifically addresses those very concerns for a very significant number of Hawai'i's students – it is estimated that 10 - 20% of the population has dyslexia or another reading disability. Furthermore, the guidelines of the Partnership for Reading (a collaborative effort by three federal agencies - the National Institute for Literacy, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and U.S. Department of Education) referenced in S.C.R. 110 address the reading needs of all children (not just those with reading disabilities). Because S.C.R. 110 provides that the working group's plan will be consistent with those guidelines, the plan will benefit all children in Hawai'i.

We note that, in prior testimony, the Department of Education (DOE) has raised three concerns about S.C.R. 110. First, the DOE says it is not the role of a teacher to diagnose a disability. We agree. However, S.C.R. 110 does not provide that teachers are to diagnose dyslexia – it says the comprehensive plan shall make training available in (among other things) early identification and assessment of dyslexia to “educators (including teachers, education administrators, education officials, and other employees providing instruction, assessment, or special services for general, compensatory, gifted, or special education, therapy and training of students under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education).” The DOE already has several qualified professionals who identify and assess children with other learning disabilities. The working group may similarly require that qualified professionals be available to identify and assess children with dyslexia, and/or to provide for training for the same, as necessary. However, HIDA does feel that the ultimate identification and selection of the most qualified personnel (school psychologist, School Support Coordinator, etc.) should be made by the DOE.

Second, the DOE says it “doesn’t recognize ‘dyslexia’ as a separate eligibility category for special education.” This statement, or a variation thereof, has been heard by many parents with dyslexic children in public schools in Hawai‘i, and poses a significant problem for students, families, and educators. Because the DOE does not “recognize dyslexia,” DOE educators are apparently not compelled, authorized, or empowered to learn more about the disability. When parents bring in outside clinical evaluations supporting a diagnosis of dyslexia, educators take the clinical evaluations “under consideration,” and valuable time and resources are wasted because they do not know how to deal with dyslexia, and/or do not feel obligated by law – yet. Regardless of whether or not the DOE “recognizes dyslexia” (whatever that may actually mean), it must address the learning needs of the large population of students with dyslexia. Unfortunately, the reality is that refusal to “recognize dyslexia” most often translates into the failure to properly teach dyslexic children.

Third, the DOE says the existing Comprehensive Student Support System (CSSS) already has procedures in place to identify and address student needs using research based strategies and interventions, that it is preparing to implement the Response to Intervention (RTI) system, and that the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has determined that Hawai‘i is in compliance regarding eligibility of services for children with specific learning disabilities. The question is whether these points are proof that DOE is adequately addressing the learning needs of students with dyslexia such that S.C.R. 110 is not required. We feel they are not sufficient proof. Both CSSS and RTI rely on educators being extremely knowledgeable regarding developmental language skills (both expressive and receptive language skills), the structure of the English language, and diversity of learning profiles. S.C.R. 110 is not redundant – it addresses the need for a comprehensive plan to bring educators to that requisite level of knowledge and skill so that the DOE will, in fact, be able to make programs such as CSSS and RTI meaningful and effective for children with dyslexia and other reading disabilities. Simply put, how can educators follow the mandates and achieve the goals of CSSS and RTI for dyslexic children if they cannot even “recognize dyslexia?” Finally, compliance as determined by OSEP is small comfort to people in Hawai‘i struggling to find solutions for children who cannot read.

We recognize that the DOE has been making efforts to address many of the concerns underlying S.C.R. 110. However, we feel S.C.R. 110 is still essential. Over the years, many organizations in Hawai‘i (notably those identified as working group members) have



trained educators who work with dyslexic students, taught or tutored dyslexic students, and provided support to dyslexic individuals and their families. They can, and are willing to, contribute expertise and experience to a comprehensive plan. Furthermore, it is essential that the University of Hawai'i participate because the UH educates many, if not most, of Hawai'i's public school teachers. The UH has programs on how to teach children with reading disabilities. The DOE and UH should collaborate. It would not make sense for the DOE to spend time and taxpayers' dollars "retraining" all public school teachers because the UH and DOE programs are materially different.

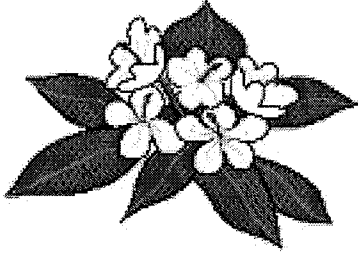
As volunteers with HIDA, we regularly meet parents who are desperate because their children cannot read. Although alternatives such as private tutoring (academic language therapy) and specialized schools exist, the reality is that existing alternatives cannot address the needs of so many children in Hawai'i. Without the systemic changes contemplated in S.C.R. 110, far too many will fall short of their potential.

HIDA appreciates the leadership of the Senate on this matter, and welcomes the opportunity to participate in the working group.

Respectfully submitted,



Elizabeth Ann Ishii



**S E A C**  
**Special Education Advisory Council**

919 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 101

Honolulu, HI 96814

Phone: 586-8126 Fax: 586-8129

email: [spin@doh.hawaii.gov](mailto:spin@doh.hawaii.gov)

April 7, 2010

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Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: SCR 110 SD 1 - REQUESTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A  
WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE  
PLAN TO IMPROVE AWARENESS OF AND STRENGTHEN  
SUPPORT FOR PERSONS WITH DYSLEXIA.

Dear Chair Mercado Kim and Members of the Committee:

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), Hawaii's State  
Advisory Panel under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act  
(IDEA), **supports** SCR 110 which aims to develop a comprehensive plan  
to identify students with dyslexia and provide them with evidence based  
instructional strategies that provide optimal educational benefit.

Students with specific learning disabilities, including dyslexia, make  
up roughly half of Hawaii's students receiving special education and  
related services. Early identification and targeted, effective educational  
interventions have been shown to ameliorate many of the negative  
outcomes associated with poor reading and writing skills.

SEAC is eager to provide a representative to serve on the working  
group. We believe that the findings of this working group will help  
to enhance efforts already underway in the Department to train both  
special and regular educators how to successfully implement Response  
to Intervention, an approach that uses students' response to high-quality  
instruction to guide educational decisions, including decisions about the  
efficacy of instruction and intervention, eligibility for special programs,  
design of individual education programs, and effectiveness of special  
education services (Batsche et al., 2005).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this issue. Should  
you have any questions, SEAC would be happy to answer them.

Sincerely,

Ivalee Sinclair, Chair

**From:** [Doris M Ching](#)  
**To:** [WAM Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of SCR 1110  
**Date:** Monday, April 05, 2010 6:44:11 PM

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## TESTIMONY VIA EMAIL IN SUPPORT OF SCR 110

April 5, 2010

**TO:** Chair Donna Mercado Kim and Vice Chair Shan Tsutsui  
Committee on Senate Ways and Means

**FROM:** Doris Ching, Emeritus Vice President for Student Affairs, UH System

**SUBJECT:** Testimony in Support of SCR 110

Senate Committee on Ways and Means, Decision Making

Wednesday, April 7, 2010, 9:30 a.m., Hawai`i State Capitol CR 211

Dear Chair Mercado Kim, Vice Chair Tsutsui and Members of the Committee on Ways & Means:

I fully support Senate Concurrent Resolution 110 and commend the Legislature for the proposed measure that will address a very important and unresolved learning disability matter for students of all ages who are academically capable to learn, but not by traditional modes of teaching and learning. This legislation will be an unprecedented statewide action to address a learning disability issue. Potentially, it will enhance learning, change lives, and make a positive difference in the lives of numerous intellectually capable students whose learning is hampered by a disability, as well as their parents and educators. SCR 110 will benefit the entire community. I urge its passage.

In four decades as an educator of grades 6 through college, I observed and worked with students who struggled with frustrations and disappointments because of dyslexia and other reading disabilities. Oftentimes, neither they nor their teachers and parents were aware of the existence of the disability. As a graduate student, I voluntarily took college courses to educate myself on the issue and was gratified to discover teaching techniques and strategies to help these students in the classroom. Helping students with dyslexia and reading disabilities succeed academically brought enormous fulfillment to me, as well as to the students. I am confident that parents, students and other educators would be grateful for similar eventual results of SCR 110. My regret was that I did not have the skills earlier in my career to recognize the problem and select appropriate teaching strategies and materials. Our students with dyslexia and reading disabilities deserve to have teachers who understand the gamut of teaching and learning--including dyslexia and reading disabilities--that can be addressed in the classroom.

A working group, established by the Department of Education Superintendent and University of Hawai`i President to study the issues and recommend action plans to develop relevant policy is a positive action. I am inspired and encouraged by your interest in this important issue. Thank you for this opportunity to write in support of

SCR 110 in your decision making session on Wednesday, April 7, 2010.

Sincerely,

Doris Ching

235 Nomilo Place, Honolulu, HI 96825

**From:** [Fujimoto, Lillian MD](#)  
**To:** [WAM Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Testimony in Support of S.C.R. 110  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 06, 2010 11:18:42 AM  
**Importance:** High

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**From:** [lhufujimoto@gmail.com](mailto:lhufujimoto@gmail.com) [<mailto:lhufujimoto@gmail.com>] **On Behalf Of** lillian fujimoto  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 06, 2010 11:14 AM  
**To:** Fujimoto, Lillian MD  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of S.C.R. 110

April 6, 2010

VIA EMAIL  
[WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)

Senate Ways and Means Committee

RE: Testimony in Support of S.C.R.110  
Decision Making  
April 7, 2010, 9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 211

Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in support of S.C.R.110.

I am a practicing pediatrician in Hawaii for more than 20 years. I have always felt helpless to the many parents who came for guidance and direction, for their children with reading problems. Guiding them to get DOE testing led to disappointing results. Many months later, these families were still struggling to help their children read.

Two years ago, I discovered that my own son had dyslexia. After coping with the shock, I immediately shifted into researching dyslexia to help my son. The past 2 years of learning about dyslexia have led me to the profoundly appalling conclusion that our schools and teachers are poorly equipped to recognize or help children with reading problems.

NIH funded Dyslexia research centers state that 1 in 5 of all people, have some form of dyslexia. This number stunned me. Leaving me breathless. Leaving me speechless. I continue to think about this number every day. How could so many children and adults who have reading issues not be identified? How could so many children and adults with reading issues not be helped? With such prevalence, why do most teachers and educators know almost nothing about dyslexia?

Current neurobiology now demonstrates brain wiring differences in dyslexics. With proper reading programs, the young brain can be taught to use more efficient reading pathways. In other words, if started in the early years, we could literally change the brain wiring for reading. There may be a small window of opportunity to help reading fluency and comprehension. Why are we missing this? Shouldn't every teacher be knowledgeable about dyslexia? Shouldn't it be a requirement for all teachers to understand this very common problem? I dream of a day when all teachers will know more than I about dyslexia.

It is with great concern and a sense of urgency for all children, that I recommend that the

interim report should be eliminated and that the task forces final report should be due in 2011 instead of 2012.

Thank you.

Lillian Fujimoto, MD  
95-1249 Meheula Pkwy  
Mililani, HI 96789

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**From:** [Doric A Little](#)  
**To:** [WAM Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of S.C.R. 110  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 06, 2010 9:33:38 AM

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April 5, 2010

VIA EMAIL  
[WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)

Senate Ways and Means Committee

RE: Testimony in Support of S.C.R.110  
Decision Making  
April 7, 2010, 9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 211

Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in support of S.C.R.110 because:

From two vantage points, I have observed the importance of early identification and subsequent adjustments of teaching style and learning techniques. I have seen that, without identification, students are likely to suffer from low self-esteem, become frustrated and confused, and believe themselves to be lazy and stupid. Such negative feelings could so easily be addressed and eliminated with early diagnosis. Something as simple as an explanation that the problem with their reading difficulties is the way they learn. When one of my medical students, who failed test after test, was identified as dyslexic he remarked "It is so much easier once you have identified the Face of the Beast." He went on to be a very successful physician on Maui.

In my role as Director of Student Development at the John A. Burns School of Medicine, I became knowledgeable on the subject of dyslexia and attention deficit disorder. I learned these are learning differences not necessarily difficulties. Approximately 10% of the classes I worked with, over a seven-year period, were dyslexic or ADD or some combination. Of the more than 50 students I helped with learning differences, only one had been identified prior. Intelligent students are able to compensate until they hit a difficult timed, standardized test and can't read fast enough. Early identification would have had such a positive effect on their lives. When a student in medical school is evaluated as an outstanding clinician, reading speed should not be a measure of their ability as a physician. I feel so strongly about this that I have written several articles published in Academic Medicine and have spoken in the mainland and Hawaii on learning differences.

In my role as wife and mother, I have observed that my husband and my son, who are both dyslexic, have profited from knowing that there was a reason they hated to read. I took my son Clark to a public school in Hawaii to be tested for dyslexia. He was in elementary school and quite obvious he was dyslexic (to me). At that time, you were not considered dyslexic in the DOE unless you read two grade levels below your current grade. Clark only read one and a half years behind.

When he was in high school, I had to explain to teachers that it was very painful for him to read aloud in class. I think things are getting better but there is room for improvement as S.C.R. 110 explains. With support from me, my husband has gone on to become and has retired from a career as a photography teacher and my son, at age 40, has become a successful short break photographer. Both have achieved their successes without early identification. However, they faced numerous struggles that could have been avoided.

In whole hearted support of S.C.R. 110, I, Dr. Doric Little, Professor Emertii, University of Hawaii, Honolulu Community College, Osaka Gakuin University, Associate Professor JABSOM, wife of Jim Little and, mother of Clark Little. The time for action is NOW.

Dr. Doric Little  
59-657 Alapio Road  
Haleiwa, Hawaii 96712



April 5, 2010

VIA EMAIL

WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

Senate Ways and Means Committee

RE: Testimony in Support of S.C.R.110  
Decision Making  
April 7, 2010, 9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 211

Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:

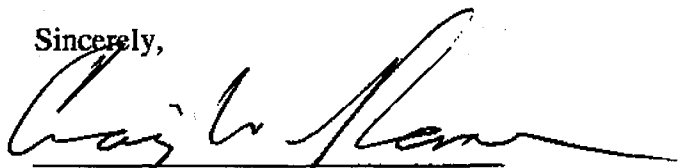
I am submitting this testimony in support of S.C.R.110.

I am a parent of a child with dyslexia. My daughter was diagnosed in 2009 at the age of nine. Throughout her early school years she has struggled with her reading, spelling, comprehension, vocabulary and math skills. I strongly feel that if parents, teachers and educational administrators were more up to date on this issue we would all be in a better position to assist children and adults with dyslexia. Currently my daughter is working with a specialized tutor that is trained in the multi-sensory techniques. We have seen some improvement but know we have a ways to go. Every day I wish that we identified and addressed this earlier. That is why I feel that the establishment of this "working group" is very important for the future of our children and adults with dyslexia.

Please support S.C.R.110.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Craig W. Shaner  
47-692 Hui Kelu Street #4  
Kaneohe, Hawaii 96744

**kim5 - Deborah**

---

**From:** Mary Wong [mwong@awlaw.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 05, 2010 4:55 PM  
**To:** WAM Testimony  
**Subject:** SCR 110 - Dyslexia - Testimony in Support (Ways and Means Committee Decision Making April 7, 2010 9:30am)

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Senate Ways and Means Committee

Re: SCR 110 Regarding Dyslexia – Decision Making April 7, 2010 9:30 am

Dear Senators:

Please support SCR 110 regarding dyslexia and education.

SCR 110 will create a task force for early identification and assessment of dyslexia, and the use of a tiered continuum of intervention and remediation that is research-based.

These methods are endorsed by the US Department of Education, the National Institute of Health (Child Health and Human Development), and the National Institute for Literacy.

Early intervention and remediation may reduce the need for costlier programs, and may qualify for federal funding. Failing students can become successful students.

The President's latest education initiative is to keep students engaged in learning, to use data to identify students at risk of failure, and to help them transition to high school and college.

SCR 110 is consistent with achieving the federal government's goals.

Please support SCR 110.

Very truly yours,

Mary Wong  
P O Box 22232, Honolulu HI 96823-2232

24 March, 2010

VIA E-MAIL  
Senate Ways and Means Committee

RE: Testimony in Support of S.C.R.110

Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in support of S.C.R.110.

I am the parent of a child with dyslexia. My son was privately diagnosed after failing seventh and eighth grade. We were aware of his struggles since fourth grade and had been told and believed that he just needed to work harder. The education professionals that he spent hours with every school day told us he was lazy and unmotivated. It was devastating to me to sit in the doctor's office after weeks of testing and hear that my son had suffered because of his undiagnosed dyslexia. How must it have felt to him for his teachers and family to constantly tell him that he was failing, when in actuality, the Department of Education had failed to provide him his appropriate education.

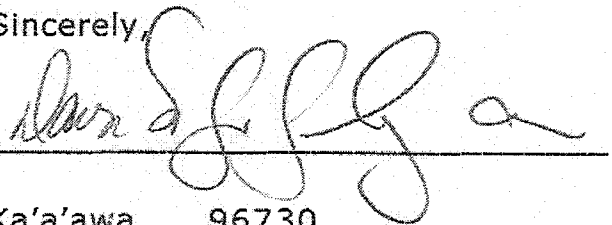
In his elementary school a scripted reading program, Success for All, was implemented. This scripted, research based reading program had no "checks" or "stops" to identify struggling readers. Of my four children that were exposed to this program, three benefited somewhat and my son with undiagnosed dyslexia was robbed of valuable time that, had we known of his dyslexia, could have been spent in a multi sensory structured learning program, such as Orton-Gillingham instruction. As soon as he was diagnosed we enrolled him in Orton-Gillingham tutoring and immediately noticed that his resistance to reading began to lessen as he gained the knowledge of language and the tools to decode that he had not received in his education career. The benefits of a multi sensory approach to instruction are universal, meaning all students can benefit from such instruction, not just struggling readers.

Timely diagnosis and intervention for my son did not happen. Please consider that parents want what is best for their children and are willing to participate as needed to make sure that their children receive the best foundation for their future. I truly feel that all children should be professionally evaluated for learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, without further delay. I am told that if my son had been diagnosed in early elementary and received appropriate intervention that his remediation would have been a matter of months instead of the years it will now take to help him achieve a reading and comprehension level commensurate with his peers.

Please support S.C.R.110.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dawn Nozawa', is written over a horizontal line.

Dawn Nozawa

PO Box 24 Ka'a'awa 96730

## **kim5 - Deborah**

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**From:** kit hawkins [kithawkins@hawaii.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 05, 2010 5:38 PM  
**To:** WAM Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony supporting SCR 110 dyslexia awareness

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

RE: Testimony in support of SCR 110  
Decision making  
April 7, 2010, 9:30 am  
Conference room 211

Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Tsutsui, and committee members,

By voting for SCR 110 you will, at no current cost to the state, take a significant step toward helping thousands of Hawaii residents affected by dyslexia and other reading disabilities. More specifically I urge you to restore the original timetable to have the report done for the 2011 legislative session. There is really no reason why this cannot be accomplished in that timeframe.

I write urging your yes vote as a parent with two grown children who were finally diagnosed with dyslexia while struggling in school in the 70's and early 80's when there was precious little knowledge of nor help for people so affected. What a difference it would have made had we as parents had some means of being made aware of dyslexia and help for it, as is SCR 110 's intended purpose. As it was it was only by coincidental contact with a knowledgeable set of parents that we were able to seek diagnosis and then the tutoring intervention that saved our children's bacon.

My sister and one brother are also affected, an example of how dyslexia often runs in families and just how common such reading disabilities are in society.

Now in retirement, I have taken specialized training in Honolulu and volunteer at Kihei and Kamalii elementary schools on Maui doing what I can to help one affected child at a time overcome this neuro system condition and catch up with their classmates in reading ability.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kit Hawkins  
203 Kulipu'u Place  
Kihei, Maui, Hawai'i 96753  
276-6487  
[kithawkins@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:kithawkins@hawaii.rr.com)

April 5, 2010

VIA EMAIL  
WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

Senate Ways and Means Committee

RE: Testimony in Support of S.C.R.110  
Decision Making  
April 7, 2010, 9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 211

Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in support of S.C.R.110.

I am an uncle of a dyslexic young woman in college and a friend of a dyslexic young man in middle school. I'm embarrassed to admit that notwithstanding these loved ones, up until a few years ago, I was ignorant about dyslexia and the difficulties that students with dyslexia may face in developing basic learning skills.

Participating in a workshop that attempted to demonstrate what dyslexic individuals may encounter in every day situations left me saddened and convinced that it is unfair to all affected to disregard the presence of dyslexia.

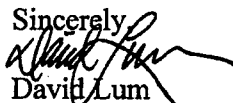
I never appreciated the *continuing* commitment – financial, educational and patience that must be extended by parents, relatives and teachers, over and above reasonable expectations, to assist my niece and young friend so they are bright, well mannered and respectful individuals. I realize that both are lucky, having received the support to lessen the negative impact of dyslexia on their education and attaining their dreams.

I shudder at the thought of an educational system lacking in terms of awareness and support for students with dyslexia. Developing basic learning skills is challenging enough. Those with dyslexia need our support and attention to be afforded the same opportunity that those students without dyslexia enjoy.

Lastly, I think the interim report should be eliminated and that the task forces report should be due in 2011 instead of 2012, as this situation must be addressed sooner than later.

Please support S.C.R.110.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Sincerely  
  
David Lum  
3258 Kaohinahi Drive  
Honolulu, HI 96817

**From:** [jkubo@hawaiiantel.net](mailto:jkubo@hawaiiantel.net)  
**To:** [WAM Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of S.C.R. 110  
**Date:** Monday, April 05, 2010 6:52:21 PM

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Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Tsutsui, and members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in support of S.C.R. 110. I am a parent of a dyslexic child, who was just diagnosed last summer. He is now 9 years old. I think it would be important to establish such a group so other families would not have to go through what we had to go through. If there was more awareness of dyslexia, I think parents would more proactive to get help for their child. Dyslexia has a stigma, but with more education of the public, I think people would be more willing to accept a child for what they have and get help for them. A lot of times, parents are in denial. I know I was, and it was my son who suffered. He is now getting help in school and after school from a tutor who is trained in multisensory learning.

I think the interim report should be eliminated and that the task forces final report should be due in 2011 instead of 2012. Time is of the essence for these kids. The sooner these children can be identified, the sooner they can be helped.

Please support S.C.R. 110.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Julie Kubo  
868 Hele Mauna St.  
Hilo, HI 96720

**From:** [slee7771@aol.com](mailto:slee7771@aol.com)  
**To:** [WAM Testimony](mailto:WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of S.C.R. 110  
**Date:** Monday, April 05, 2010 7:28:27 PM

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April 5, 2010

VIA EMAIL  
[WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)

Senate Ways and Means Committee

RE: Testimony in Support of S.C.R.110  
Decision Making  
April 7, 2010, 9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 211

Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in support of S.C.R.110.

It is disheartening to learn through my volunteerism with the Hawai'i Branch of the International Dyslexia Association ("HIDA") that dyslexia is still inadequately addressed in the Hawai'i State Public School System when this learning disability affects between ten and twenty percent of Hawai'i's population.

This resolution addressing dyslexia in Hawai'i is crucial as a collaborative effort between educators, dyslexia experts and advocates, and government officials is direly needed to provide our students with the proper foundation for learning, which requires the mastery of reading. Multi-sensory language ("MSL") and other research-based methods of instruction must be included within the teaching curriculum, as children with dyslexia can learn

to read, write, and spell through these methods, which also fortify the reading skills of children

without dyslexia. This new teaching curriculum will ensure that all Hawai'i's public school students are granted access to achieving mandatory reading skills.

Please expedite this important matter by eliminating the interim report and moving the

final report forward to 2011 and not 2012. Hawai'i's students with dyslexia have already waited far too long.

Please support S.C.R. 110.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Lee  
1018 Lunalilo Street, #803  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822



**From:** Pamela Wilson  
**To:** WAM Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of S.C.R 110  
**Date:** Monday, April 05, 2010 7:43:18 PM

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Aloha, my name is Pam Wilson and I live on the Hamakua Coast in the town of Pepeekeo on the Big Island. I am a Special Education Teacher and have taught both on Maui and the Big Island for 17 years at both the Intermediate level and currently Elementary children. Not only have I spent many years teaching children who have had strong indications and symptomologies of Dyslexia, I also am the parent of a 13 year old son who has Dyslexia, as well as a younger 8 year old son who I am suspecting may also have Dyslexia.

First I would like to share some personal experiences and frustrations as a teacher I have encountered in working with children who I suspect are Dyslexic. First off, it is very frustrating when as a teacher with some training in specialized programs for Dyslexic learners, I am constantly told by top level people at the school and district that I cannot use these programs to teach these kids, due to fears of lawsuits I suppose. Eventhough the state did pay for me to be trained, and it is a proven effective program I am still instructed not to do it. This is very frustrating because for some of the kids I have taught I know if I was given a chance to use this with them it may have worked. What I end up doing is tutoring the kids after school free of charge just so I can teach them to read.

Eventhough Dyslexia is considered to be a Learning Disability, it still requires a specialized approach, and not the one size fits all approach. Children with Dyslexia deserve to be instructed by Special Education Teachers who have training and knowledge of this specific disability. District level people, and school level Administrators also need to have training and an understanding of this disability, so they can support the use of proven techniques, and programs to teach children with Dyslexia. There also needs to be an understanding so children get the proper accommodations and supports in the classroom so they can be successful. All schools should carry a supply of recorded books, and provide ways for these kids to use technology to help them, without it being a struggle to get these supports. I bet if the State started to take this approach by supporting S.C.R. 110, there would eventually be less law suits of parents suing for their kids to attend private schools who do address the Dyslexic learners.

Now I would like to offer testimony from a parents perspective. When I first noticed and believed my eldest son to be Dyslexic I was real hesitant to place him special education, because I know the public schools are not equipped nor trained to work with children who have this type of disability. As the years went by I saw this very intelligent, happy go lucky child start to slide down hill as he was constantly being teased by his peers for not being able to read or write. He was becoming frustrated, angry, and started feeling stupid. He began not wanting to go to school anymore. At this point I knew I needed to do something. I knew if I had the DOE test him he would only get a Specific Learning Disability lable without stating specifically what was wrong. I knew he had Dyslexia, so does his dad, uncles, and aunts. So, I called one of the few people who test for Dyslexia, Jeri Millard, and had a private assessment done to get that Dyslexic lable for him, as he will live with for the rest of his life. Yes, it was expensive.....\$800, but highly worth it. Once I was able to explain to him what he had and go into his classroom to educate his peers on Dyslexia, the tease stopped, and he started feeling good about himself. Now at 13 he is able to tell his teachers what accommodations he needs and he participates in his IEP meetings. I have also had him in private tutoring sessions at Hilo Rite Care during the summer months, that I have had to pay for. At 13 and going into High School soon, I am very concerned about his decoding level, and eventhough he has made some progress I personally do not feel he has made the gains in reading he could be making if the schools knew how to address Dyslexia.

The social problems and lack of self esteem experienced by my son when he was younger, is a very typical reaction of children who have Dyslexia that goes undiagnosed and they do not receive the right program and education. For these children it often leads to behavior problems as a way to avoid doing work they cannot do. It also leads to higher levels of absenteeism, depression, and high school drop outs who eventually end up in jail.

In conclusion, I am asking you to do the right thing during your decision making on April 7, 2010 @ 9:30am in Conference Room 211, by supporting S.C.R. 110 so all our children get an appropriate education, and we move Hawaii into the 21st Century in our education system. Maybe by being proactive about this, there could be fewer law suits, less public education

money being spent on private schools, and the State could save money!

Thank You,  
Pamela Wilson  
PO Box 701  
Pepeekeo, HI 96783  
964-3401

**From:** [Kate Lloyd](#)  
**To:** [WAM Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** "Testimony in Support of S.C.R. 110"  
**Date:** Monday, April 05, 2010 7:58:00 PM

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April 5, 2010

VIA EMAIL  
WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

Senate Ways and Means Committee

RE: Testimony in Support of S.C.R.110  
Decision Making  
April 7, 2010, 9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 211

Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in support of S.C.R.110.

My son, age 11 is dyslexic and is a public school student at Aikahi Elementary School. As a dyslexic, he does not benefit from the traditional teaching methods used in public school and was falling behind his peers. Despite testing that put him in the 98th percentile for cognitive abilities and the 2nd percentile for reading, the Department of Education's position was that they do not recognize dyslexia as a learning disability. I attempted to have an IEP implemented for him at his school but stopped the process when I learned that the only resource that would be offered even if I successfully navigated the process, was more reading practice by teachers who have no training or expertise in dyslexia. I have had to hire a private tutor for him and luckily he is able to keep up with his classmates but there are many who cannot afford to do this.

S.C.R. 110 will increase the awareness of dyslexia, support our public school teachers and increase the effectiveness of our public schools. I urge you to support it and to restore the original report date of 2011.

Please support S.C.R.110.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kate Lloyd  
180 Mookua St.  
Kailua , Hi 96734

**From:** [Diana Honeker](#)  
**To:** [WAM Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of S.C.R. 110  
**Date:** Monday, April 05, 2010 8:15:23 PM

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April 5, 2010

VIA EMAIL  
WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

Senate Ways and Means Committee

-  
RE: Testimony in Support of S.C.R.110  
Decision Making  
April 7, 2010, 9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 211

Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in support of S.C.R.110.

We are the parents of a 15 year old dyslexic. Beginning at age 9, it took us more than 3 years to finally have a diagnosis of dyslexia. We were not able to get any public service to assist us and it is only through our own struggles and perseverance were we able to get him the help he needs. We have chosen to put our family under financial stress to get our child the help he needs to be a successful student and successful contributor to society. We truly believe that should he not receive his current interventions paid out of our family's budget, he would have a poor chance of acquiring a basic education and opportunities for success as an adult.

Knowing that 10-20% of the population is dyslexic, we are appalled to know that there are many, many other children in our son's situation and we as a society and community are ignoring these children's needs. These children are labeled "failures" because their learning difficulties are purposely not identified and not addressed. The negative impact on these children and their families has lifelong destructive implications for them and our society. If 10-20% of our children just needed glasses to correct their learning difficulties, could we consciously deny them glasses to improve their learning? This is what we do to our dyslexic children, we knowingly allow them to fail.

Please support S.C.R.110.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Diana and Ken Honeker  
98-1934 Hoala St.  
Aiea, HI 96701

**From:** [Dave and Jean Martin](#)  
**To:** [WAM Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of S.C.R. 110  
**Date:** Monday, April 05, 2010 8:19:12 PM

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April 5, 2010

VIA EMAIL  
[WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)

Senate Ways and Means Committee

-  
RE: Testimony in Support of S.C.R.110  
Decision Making  
April 7, 2010, 9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 211

Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in support of S.C.R.110.

I am the parent of a dyslexic child who was not diagnosed until 3<sup>th</sup> grade by our doctor. If she would have been diagnosed at an early age at school by the DOE and been taught to read using the appropriate researched based methods, she would not be so far behind at school. At least 20% of the population is dyslexic and many people go undiagnosed resulting in poor school performance and low self esteem. If there was more awareness by DOE staff, these intelligent people could be taught using the appropriate strategies thereby providing them with a positive and successful school experience. I have found that my child's elementary school teachers are unaware that many of their students are dyslexic and do not know the proper way for these children to be taught to read. Consequently, I am in support of this resolution. Additionally, I feel that interim report should be eliminated and that the task forces final report should be due in 2011 instead of 2012 .

Please support S.C.R.110.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jean Hebert-Martin  
5480 Po'ola Street  
Honolulu, HI 96821

March 23, 2010

VIA EMAIL  
Sarah Meyer  
hisunnysam@gmail.com

Senate Ways and Means Committee

RE: Testimony in Support of S.C.R.110

Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in support of S.C.R.110.

As a parent of a dyslexic child in Hawaii's public school system and an individual who has been identified as being dyslexic I believe S.R.C 110 is important to the early learning environment of our children. Frequently dyslexic children are very bright and are able to develop early coping methods to stay at age level up to the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade but as they enter into 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and above their coping skills fall short of the expectations of reading comprehension and writing proficiency.

There are many methods that show that are supported by extensive research. By training our public school teachers in early identification protocols and diverse reading methods such as Slingerland and Ortin Gillingham our young children will have the opportunity to thrive and stay at grade level, thereby lessening the experience of early school failure. By providing our educators with the tools and resources necessary our young children will be better equipped to pursue their academic endeavors.

I believe support for dyslexic children in the public school system is an issue that cannot wait. This legislation not only supports the teachers and children but it will provide cost savings in the future. Please consider eliminating the interim report and push to have the final report due in 2011. The futures and education of many of Hawaii's young children are at stake.

**Please support S.C.R.110.**

Thank you.

Sincerely,

---

Sarah Meyer  
570 Meyerkord Loop  
Honolulu, HI 96818

April 5, 2010

VIA EMAIL

WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

Senate Ways and Means Committee

RE: Testimony in Support of S.C.R.110  
Decision Making  
April 7, 2010, 9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 211

Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in support of S.C.R.110.

I am a child psychiatrist who has practiced in Hawaii since 1970. I've been a consultant to many local agencies including the Hawaii State Department of Education, and have been a specialist treating Autistic Disorders for the past 15 years. One of the major problems that autistic children, youth and adults have is dyslexia and dyspraxia (difficulty in reading and in speaking). This difficulty causes them to become socially and vocationally handicapped if it is not actively treated, which means that the State of Hawaii is required to support these handicapped adults through their entire adult life after than graduate high school. *The only time that dyslexia and dyspraxia can be treated is in childhood, so the Department of Education is the primary agency for preventing this lifelong disability.*

Unfortunately, our DOE does not appear to understand the seriousness of the situation. In addition to those children with dyslexia, the growing epidemic of Autism Spectrum Disorders (the prevalence is now 1 per 100 children, up from 3 in 10,000 20 years ago!) will totally swamp the already inadequate DOE services for reading and communication disorders if the DOE continues to claim they are providing the necessary IEP (Individualized Educational Program) services.. As a specific example, the average autistic child I see receives only 20 minutes of speech-language services twice a week, and less or no dyslexic-oriented services. Thus, the situation is both serious and urgent. This cannot be delayed, so that the Task Forces final report should be due either this year (2010) or next (2011) rather than 2012.

In brief, please, please support S.C.R.110.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
William M. Bolman, M.D., F.A.A.C.A.P.  
Professor of Child Psychiatry (retired), U.H.  
1600 Kapiolani Blvd. Suite 620  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814  
e-mail: wmbolman@gmail.com

## TESTIMONY TO SCR 110

I am Gerald Suyama, retired principal of Pearl City High School, and I support Senate Concurrent Resolution 110. I have been in education for forty (40) years. As I look back on my career, there is one aspect in the total scheme of how we serve our students that is of great concern to me. We have not dealt with the reading problem associated with dyslexia. Dyslexia is treated as a stepchild with no clear distinction as to the category of learning dysfunction, and therefore there has not been a systematic approach to helping students and adults overcome the obstacles associated with dyslexia.

Students and adults struggle everyday of their lives trying to keep up with classroom assignments and tasks involving reading. Loss of self-esteem and confidence are debilitating affects of illiteracy. Students drop out of school and many will end up in prison. In fact the average prison population is 75% dyslexic. We can no longer ignore the toll dyslexia has taken on our society. Our democratic society demands a knowledgeable and participatory citizenry. Those who struggle with literacy are often left out of this process resulting in a weakened community.

We must bring all institutions and agencies together with a single purpose of focusing on strategies to bring awareness and training to address the issues surrounding dyslexia. We must bring awareness to our parents, to our colleges who are training teachers, to our prisons so that literacy programs may be instituted, and to all the grade level schools, to train the teachers who are facing these students now. If we are successful, the economic and social impact will be enormous. We need to act now.

Thank you.



**From:** [Margaret Higa](#)  
**To:** [WAM Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony In Support of S.C.R. 110  
**Date:** Monday, April 05, 2010 9:31:29 PM

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April 5, 2010

VIA EMAIL  
[WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)

Senate Ways and Means Committee

-  
RE: Testimony in Support of S.C.R.110  
Decision Making  
April 7, 2010, 9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 211

Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in support of S.C.R.110.

I am the parent of two dyslexic children and the program manager for the Hawai'i Branch of the International Dyslexia Association (HIDA). I have watched my own children's frustrations as they struggled to learn and keep up with their peers in a classroom in which the teacher only used traditional teaching methods. I have listened to the heart-breaking stories of parents whose high school aged children are only reading at a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level, even after years in a special education classroom.

I firmly believe that passage and implementation of S.C.R. 110 is crucial to equipping our schools and teachers with the knowledge and training in appropriate research-based approaches to teach dyslexic children and other struggling readers. Dyslexic children can and do learn when taught with multisensory structured language research-based approaches. Time is critical; too many children are failing to learn and realize their potential. I urge you to eliminate the interim report and have the final report of the task force due in 2011.

Please support S.C.R.110.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Margaret J. Higa  
95-112 Waimoku Place  
Mililani, HI 96789

## kim2 - Jo Ann

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**From:** barbara george [barbarageorge40@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 05, 2010 10:05 PM  
**To:** WAM Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of S.C.R. 110

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

April 5, 2010

VIA EMAIL

[WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)

Senate Ways and Means Committee  
State of Hawaii

RE: Testimony in Support of S.C.R.110  
Decision Making  
April 7, 2010, 9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 211

Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in support of S.C.R.110.

I am a Licensed Clinical Child Psychologist. I have worked fulltime for the U.S. Department of the Army through Tripler AMC for the last 6 ½ years. The bulk of my work has been to evaluate military-dependent children for medical conditions that adversely impact their educational/academic functioning or progress, such as Dyslexia. I have evaluated hundreds of children attending Hawaii public schools since 2003 and am aware of the course of several hundred more cases through the work of my colleagues. In addition, I have a child attending a public elementary school.

I know that the HI DOE does not have research-based and empirically-validated intervention programs in place to provide the needed educational services to children with a Dyslexia diagnosis. Upon being presented with a thorough evaluation report that supports a diagnosis of Dyslexia, schools offer a cookie-cutter approach that varies from school to school (from inclusion to resource room time for 'Language Arts'). The required breadth and intensity of the intervention is not available.

Teacher background and training varies wildly both within and across schools. While a small subset of special education teachers has completed Multi-Sensory Structured Language (MSL) training, some schools have zero teachers trained in these methodologies. I am aware that the very few teachers who do consistently implement MSL methods in their classrooms achieve notable results and are often viewed by the children and families fortunate enough to fall within their sphere of influence for a precious year as saviors: saving the child's self-esteem and sense of worth; saving the child from the predictable path of school failure and drop-out, poor job opportunities; increased risk for substance abuse; increased risk of running afoul of the law; saving the child's ability to find the strengths and continue on a path of learning and preparation for independence and active community participation. Hawaii has trained and prepared too few of these teachers!

Many families are taking drastic steps: home-school; private school; paying out-of-pocket for after-hours academic language therapy with a therapist trained in the MSL approach; seeking any means possible to leave Hawaii for the sake of their child's education.

I urge you in the strongest terms possible to fully support S.C.R. 110. For the sake of Hawaii's keiki (and that includes the military children who are our guests for a matter of years) and the future potential of the State, it is essential that DOE policy regarding the identification and provision of services and methodologies for Dyslexia and other reading/language-based learning disorders/disabilities be 1) standardized; 2) research-based and empirically-validated; 3) state-of-the-art.

In addition, I urge you to eliminate the requirement for an interim report. Rather, the Task Force's final report should be due ASAP. Hawaii cannot wait 2 more years simply to get the report. The know-how is out there, the research is clear in its support for a MSL approach/method.

Mahalo/Thank you.

Sincerely,

Barbara L. George, Ph.D.

Barbara L. George  
59-066 Kumupali Rd.  
Haleiwa, HI 96712  
(808) 638-5690

**kim2 - Jo Ann**

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**From:** Jason & Sue [jasonqm@earthlink.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 05, 2010 10:01 PM  
**To:** WAM Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of S.C.R. 110

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

April 5, 2010

VIA EMAIL  
[WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)

Senate Ways and Means Committee

RE: Testimony in Support of S.C.R.110  
Decision Making  
April 7, 2010, 9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 211

Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in support of S.C.R.110.

As parents of two children with dyslexia we feel the public school system has been unable to address the needs to which our children learn best. Both of our children have been in the Hawaii school system for most, if not all, of their primary school years. We have fought continuously to get the services and education they both deserve. Even though they both have beautiful IEP's, they only work if the school follows what is in the IEP. We feel that both our children have tire marks on their backs, because they are the ones the system has left behind. They both were promoted yearly to the next grade, but never have had the foundation they need to be successful dyslexic students. School has been a struggle both academically and emotionally! After 3 years of fighting the system we have had to place both children into private schools. This is not only a burden on us financially; it is yet another transition for kids. They already feel different from the other students and now they have to leave what they know.

I truly feel if resources were made available to schools, we could help these children before it is too late. The resources I am talking about are; qualified teachers trained in methodologies known to work with students with dyslexia and other specific learning disabilities; knowledge in identifying dyslexia early; and financial funds to purchase computer programs and multi-sensory curriculum.

I think that the interim report should be eliminated and the task forces final report should be due in 2011. I hope you make the right decision in supporting this resolution. What would you do if your child had dyslexia?

Please support S.C.R.110.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Suzanne and Jason Biel  
166 Fislul Ct #102

**kim2 - Jo Ann**

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**From:** Julie Larson-Hicks [jl Larson@lejardinacademy.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 06, 2010 8:07 AM  
**To:** WAM Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of S.C.R. 110

April 6, 2010

VIA EMAIL  
[WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)

Senate Ways and Means Committee

RE: Testimony in Support of S.C.R.110  
Decision Making  
April 7, 2010, 9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 211

Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in support of S.C.R.110.

I am a teacher with a Masters degree in Special Education from the University of Hawaii. I began my teaching career in 1990 at the Variety School of Hawaii, which predominately taught students with dyslexia. It was there that I learned much of my knowledge about dyslexia and the best practices to use when teaching students with reading challenges. From that time on, I have spent my career (17 years) further educating myself about dyslexia and teaching and tutoring students with dyslexia (I have been a resource teacher now for the last 10 years). When I heard about S.C.R.110, I felt obliged to submit a testimony in support of the resolution. I have always felt that if the Dept. of Education used the current, research based practices when teaching Hawaii's students with reading disabilities, there would be many more of our "special" children finding success with learning and going on to higher education and less students dropping out.

At this point in my career, I have repeatedly seen, first-hand, as well as in educational journals, how beneficial an individualized, structured, multi-sensory approach is when teaching students with dyslexia. This type of instruction is researched-based and has been proven successful repeatedly throughout many years. Often, I have wondered why the Dept. of Education does not use this type of instruction when teaching Hawaii's children with reading challenges - since 15-20% of our population are students with dyslexia.

Since Hawaii is behind many of the states in regards to using researched-based best practices in regards to instructing our children with disabilities, use of an interim report is absurd. It is time for all of our state's professionals to get right to business and solve this problem in as short amount of time as possible - why wait until 2012? Our students need this now!

Please support S.C.R.110.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Julie A. Larson-Hicks  
Julie A. Larson-Hicks, M.Ed  
45-422 C Kamehameha Hwy.

## kim2 - Jo Ann

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**From:** Lori\_Nelson/NANAKULI/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us  
**Sent:** Monday, April 05, 2010 4:08 PM  
**To:** WAM Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in support of S.C.R. 110

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

April 5, 2010

VIA EMAIL  
[WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)

Senate Ways and Means Committee

RE: Testimony in Support of S.C.R.110  
Decision Making  
April 7, 2010, 9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 211

Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in support of S.C.R.110.

I am a special education teacher with fourteen years' experience, nine in PA and five in HI. I have an M. Ed. in Special Education. I have been trained in Orton-Gillingham-based instructional programs for students with dyslexia. I have taught students grades K-12, as well as college courses in reading remediation and in special education. Currently, I teach medically fragile students and students with severe reading lags in a HI-DOE school.

I am frankly appalled at the lack of knowledge in the regular ed and special ed programs here in Hawaii, as I see that lack in my teaching colleagues and hear about it from my daughter at UH (who is training to be a teacher). Fifty years ago, my grandmother, a remedial reading teacher in the Philadelphia public schools, applied Orton and Gillingham's principles to teach me, her dyslexic granddaughter, to read. She was sufficiently successful at this that I required only a "touch-up" from her in fifth grade to excel in the academic arena, particularly because I was able to decode anything, and my brain's inborn inclination to reverse or misread letters and numbers was never a threat to that academic success once grandma got through with me, or rather, through to me.

So I know from experience as an educator and as a student that it could be entirely possible to "fix" dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, dyslogia, etc., within the context of regular and special education as it already exists in Hawaii--one simply has to insist that educators look for and address these issues in a timely fashion. The fix itself is relatively simple, in my experience, once the teachers are trained to implement it.

As it happens, I have been handed a couple of kids each year whose primary issue, as sixth graders, is their extremely low reading level. Most of them seem to have dyslexia, as demonstrated by reversals of b/d, p/b, m/w, u/n, g/q, g/d, and q/d, either when reading, writing, or both. Why wait until sixth grade? Why not screen in mid-second grade for dyslexia (not with an MRI but with one of the several excellent, paper and pencil assessments for that) and then institute a reading and writing program that addresses the reversals? One could even encourage teachers to instruct all new learners in methods that work well with all students, and especially

with those who have reading disabilities, including dyslexia. Hand Writing Without Tears™, augmented by having the child make the letter sound each time s/he writes it; a multi-sensory approach to letter shapes for all students in primary grades; ReadAmerica Phonographix™; Lindamood-Bell; Wilson...there are any number of easily-implemented programs that when rigorously applied, create successful learners at an early age. The sixth graders I have gotten have layers of emotional resistance to instruction, layers that require patient unraveling before they are even available to learn. Why wait, and build that up? Why hold onto the notion that dyslexia is an intractable problem requiring expensive and out-sourced instruction to conquer?

Let's bring public education in Hawaii up to speed in reading instruction so that our students can successfully both decode and construct meaning from written information, and also convey information in their own writing.

Thank you for supporting S.C.R.110.

Sincerely,  
Lori Jane Nelson  
87-114 Kipalale Place  
Waianae, HI 96792

April 6, 2010

VIA EMAIL

WAMTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

Senate Ways and Means Committee

RE: Testimony in Support of S.C.R.110  
Decision Making  
April 7, 2010, 9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 211

Chair Kim, Vice-Chair Tsutsui, and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in support of S.C.R.110.

As the grandparent of a 15 year old with severe dyslexia, I urge support of S.C.R. 110. My grandson completed K-4 in a DOE school before anyone recognized that he was unable to read. Although he was enrolled in Special Ed, his reading skills did not improve. A private tutor and a private tester determined that he is dyslexic. We were told by the school administration that dyslexia was not a learning disability recognized by the DOE. We also know that the teachers were not equipped to teach a student with dyslexia. Consequently my grandson fell futher and further behind, repeated a grade and was generally unsuccessful in school. What a waste of his time, energy, and spirit!

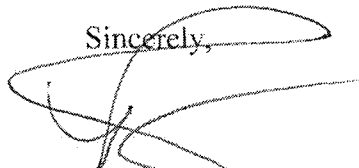
No thanks to the DOE, we have found a suitable school for him where he has learned to manage his reading disability. The school uses recognized tools and methods that were not in use in the public school.

Dyslexia affects a significant number of people, a number significant enough not to be overlooked or ignored. In order to address this portion of the population and the people with whom they live, work and study, please act to adopt legislation that will provide the necessary educational opportunitites for people with dyslexia.

Please support S.C.R.110.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nancy A. Rowe', written over a horizontal line.

Nancy A. Rowe  
1529 Uluahku Place  
Kailua HI 96734