REQUESTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO
EVALUATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A PLAN TO PROMOTE GREATER
AWARENESS OF DYSLEXIA AND PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT FOR
STUDENTS WITH DYSLEXIA AND OTHER LITERACY CHALLENGES.

WHEREAS, dyslexia is a learning disability that is
neurological in origin and is characterized by difficulties with
accurate or fluent word recognition, poor spelling, and decoding
abilities; and

WHEREAS, these difficulties typically result from a deficit
in the phonological component of language that is often
unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and requires
the provision of effective classroom instruction; and

WHEREAS, secondary consequences may include problems with
reading comprehension and reduced reading experience, which can
impede the growth of vocabulary and background knowledge; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that up to twenty percent of the
population as a whole in the United States has dyslexia or
another reading disability; and

WHEREAS, on January 14, 2013, a working group created
pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 110, Regular
Session of 2010, submitted to the Senate and House of
Representatives Committees on Education the Comprehensive Plan
for Teaching Reading in Hawaii Schools, which addresses dyslexia
awareness and literacy instruction as they relate to teacher
preparation programs, teacher licensure requirements,
professional development for educators, and reading programs in
public schools; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Education continues to address
the concerns raised by the working group through implementation
of its dyslexia awareness efforts and a comprehensive student support system embedded at every school; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-seventh Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2013, the House of Representatives concurring, that the Board of Education and the Department of Education are requested to evaluate the following items:

(1) The promotion of awareness of dyslexia;

(2) Professional development available to educators to support students with dyslexia or other literacy challenges;

(3) Recommended staffing options and the funding required to create licensed literacy specialist positions statewide who meet requirements to be established by the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board and related operational and professional development budgetary needs;

(4) Working with the University of Hawaii and Hawaii Teacher Standards Board on the feasibility of licensing requirements for literacy specialists; and

(5) Establishing targeted complex area resources to strengthen comprehensive student support systems, including data-based decision making; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education submit a written report to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2014, on the status of its efforts to provide comprehensive support services for students with dyslexia and other literacy challenges; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report include the number of schools with licensed reading teachers, licensed reading specialists, and licensed literacy specialists, including the number of individuals in each position by grade level and subject matter; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report include a discussion of best practices and complex area-based support, as well as the Department of Education's plans and capacity needs to replicate its efforts to address dyslexia and literacy challenges statewide; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of Education, Superintendent of Education, President of the University of Hawaii System, Chairperson of the University of Hawaii Board of Regents, and Executive Director of the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board.