



COMMITTEE ON  
**SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY**  
Lamar Smith, Chairman

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**Statement of Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas)**

Markup of the *Research Excellence and Advancements for Dyslexia Act (READ Act)* ([H.R. 3033](#))

**Chairman Smith:** H.R. 3033, the Research Excellence and Advancements for Dyslexia Act, or READ Act, will help millions of Americans who struggle with dyslexia. It is fitting that we consider this bill now since October is Dyslexia Awareness Month.

The READ Act requires the National Science Foundation's (NSF) budget to include a specific line item in the Research in Disabilities Education program. And the bill requires the NSF to invest at least five million dollars annually for merit-reviewed, competitively awarded dyslexia research projects.

It uses funds already appropriated for the NSF Research and Related Activities account or the Education and Human Resources Directorate for these projects.

Dyslexia affects an estimated 8.5 million school children and one in six Americans in some form. It causes these individuals to struggle with reading, though they often have normal or above-average intelligence. There is no proven correlation between dyslexia and intelligence.

Despite the prevalence of dyslexia, many Americans remain undiagnosed, untreated and silently struggle at school or work. Too many children undiagnosed with dyslexia have difficulties in the classroom and sometimes drop out of school and face uncertain futures.

In a hearing last year on the science of dyslexia—one of the best-attended hearings of this Committee—experts testified how research in the area of neuroscience has led to practical ways of diagnosing and dealing with dyslexia and why more research was necessary.

At last week's hearing on the READ Act, our witnesses provided valuable insights and information, which are reflected in a few important changes incorporated in the manager's amendment I will offer shortly.

Dr. Rachel Robillard described why dyslexia is different than other learning disabilities. She pointed out that dyslexia doesn't correlate with intelligence and that those with dyslexia often have academic strengths in other areas that tie to STEM education, which is an important part of the NSF's mission.

Dr. Robillard said, in part:

“Dyslexia is not a disorder that can be compartmentalized; it is not just a deficit, but carries with it inherent strengths that have been recognized for decades. These might include other areas of academic strength, creative ways of thinking, more acute perceptual reasoning, and many other traits. When dyslexia goes unidentified and undiagnosed, these strengths are often suppressed.”

More research focused on practical application is the best way to help develop the potential of students. Who knows, one might become the next Albert Einstein, who himself had dyslexia.

This research includes greater awareness of how to identify students with dyslexia, better curricula, more resources in the hands of parents, teachers, and students, and the development of proven implementation and scaling models for effective interventions.

If you can't read, it is hard to achieve. If we change the way we approach dyslexia, we can turn this disability into an opportunity for a brighter and more productive future for millions of Americans. The READ Act is a step in the right direction to help those with dyslexia. The bill, sponsored by an equal number of Republicans and Democrats, ensures that our children will have the means to succeed. Nothing could be more important to them.

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