

## OPENING STATEMENT

Ranking Member Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)  
Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

*Dyslexia and the Need to READ: H.R. 3022, the Research Excellence and Advancements for  
Dyslexia Act*  
Full Committee Hearing

September 30, 2015

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing. I want to thank the witnesses for being here today. I look forward to hearing your testimony.

I have known several people who have dyslexia. Although dyslexia is a lifelong condition, if someone gets proper diagnosis and instruction, they can succeed in schools and go on to have successful careers. I would not be surprised if we have some examples of that in the room today. The Science, Space, and Technology Committee oversees most of the federal nondefense R&D, but we do not directly oversee the lead agency for dyslexia research, which is NIH.

Moreover, we do not oversee the Department of Education, which supports educational programs and provides services for students with learning disabilities, including dyslexia.

However, we do oversee the National Science Foundation, which supports fundamental research that provides a foundation for dyslexia research as well as educational research.

Although several of the Directorates at NSF fund research that contributes to the science of dyslexia, the majority of the NSF-funded research relating to dyslexia is supported by the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences Directorate and the Education and Human Resources Directorate—two important NSF Directorates.

For example, the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences Directorate funded the Science of Learning Centers Program, which supported six large-scale, long-term, interdisciplinary centers that have made significant contributions to learning research.

I look forward to hearing from Dr. Tallal about the Temporal Dynamics of Learning Center of which she is a co-Director. This Center focuses on understanding the role that timing plays in learning and applying that research to improving educational tools and practices. Since processing language is one of the fastest things we do, it is clear that timing plays a critical role in understanding speech and language. While the Centers program is not awarding new grants, SBE continues to be a leader in funding the science of learning research.

Today we are going to talk about H.R. 3033, the *Research Excellence and Advancements for Dyslexia* or the *READ Act*.

This bill would require NSF to have a line item for the Research in Disabilities Education program in NSF's Education Directorate and to fund at least \$5 million dollars a year on dyslexia research. The research would be on the science of dyslexia, including the early identification of individuals with dyslexia, professional development for teachers and school administrators, and curricula development and educational tools.

I fully support funding more research in language-based learning disabilities, including dyslexia. But I do have to point out that this bill does not provide NSF with additional money to fund that research. Rather, it requires NSF to use existing funding.

Although I support more funding for dyslexia research, in the current environment of flat research budgets, I would have liked to see additional money provided for this priority in the bill.

But with that said, I do support the goals and intentions of this legislation. I want to thank the witnesses for being here today. I look forward to your testimony and the Q&A.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back the balance of my time.