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HB 2203 Adding FASD to the Conditions that May Establish Eligibility for Special Education
Proponent – Written Testimony for Hearing On January 15, 2026

Honorable Members of the House Committee on Education:

My name is Alexander Bean. I am a senior in high school and will turn 18 next month. I was born in Kansas and spent time going to Head Start before I was moved from my biological home at age 5 and entered the Foster Care System. At that time, my world was changing in so many ways. After 6 years, my foster family became my adoptive family. They encouraged me to do my best at school and supported me with learning.

I currently enjoy debate along with competitive speech and drama. In fact, when I leave here, I will be competing in the 6A State Debate Tournament. But, while my oral skills are good, that's probably my best strength. I struggle academically. I have a fetal alcohol spectrum disorder that was finally diagnosed in September 2023. My parents already knew about this disorder as my oldest brother is also impacted. My parents tried to provide me and my younger brother with the structure and routines to help us succeed in school and life despite that disability. They did that before I even knew there was a problem. Not all kids are as lucky.

One of my biggest challenges is executive function. I am just now learning to implement organizational skills to keep my assignments together and track deadlines. I still can't predict the amount of time necessary to complete a task and am always getting a late start on things. Part of the problem is that I also process slowly and depending on the speed of voice, might only catch every 3rd word spoken to me. Filling in the rest of the instruction makes learning a challenge. My defense for that is to ignore the task completely while I try and figure out what it is I'm supposed to do. This is one way FASD impacts my brain. I do better when directions are also written on the board. But, the hardest part of this disability for me personally is that I just don't remember. We can cover a topic in class one day and I won't recall it the next day and certainly don't remember for the unit test or finals at the end of the semester. These things impact my grades. I take medication to help with focus, but I still need reminders. A lot of them. And, that makes me feel inferior.

I've been told that FASD also impacts me socially. I am a follower. And, I don't always use good judgement in thinking ahead to consequences — be those who I associate with or what activity we do. I probably have always been average in school. I never had an IEP, but probably should have qualified for one. In elementary school, I received help through the multi-tiered system of supports. I especially had trouble with math. In that subject, things were always building on previous material and I always felt lost. To this day, math is hard for me.

Yet I'd like to state that with support from home and because my parents advocated for a 504-plan allowing my teachers to know how best to help me, I will graduate in May. The teachers I have loved the most, let me use my areas of strength whenever possible.

HB 2203 will help other students like myself. Adding Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders to the list of conditions that may be eligible for special education would give educators reference for their behavior and allow kids who need reteaching, redirection, and help to get it.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alex Bean". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Alex" on the top line and "Bean" on the bottom line.

Alexander Bean