

ADVOCACY GUIDE: *Get the READ Act Moving*

Tell the Senate: Don't just introduce it. Schedule the vote.

WHAT IS THE READ ACT?

The READ Act is the biggest federal literacy reform in over a decade, and it's well overdue. There is not a single state across the country where the majority of students are reading on grade level. And about one third of graduates are going onto college and the workforce without the fundamental literacy skills they need to succeed. For too long, parents have been watching their children struggle through bedtime stories, through homework, without any screenings or supports to catch up.

The Reading Excellence and Achievement for Development (READ) Act is the fix on the table. It's bipartisan - introduced by Chairman Bill Cassidy (R-LA) and Senator Maggie Hassan (D-NH), alongside Senators Mark Kelly (D-AZ), Jim Banks (R-IN), John Hickenlooper (D-CO), and Tim Scott (R-SC) on June 8, 2026. The READ Act represents a national commitment to the science of reading, scaling the successes we've seen in Mississippi and Louisiana so that children across the country can benefit from high-quality instruction grounded in phonics.

What the READ Act does



HIGH QUALITY INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS ALIGNED TO THE SCIENCE OF READING, SO THAT EVIDENCE-BASED INSTRUCTION IS THE NORM RATHER THAN THE EXCEPTION



UNIVERSAL EARLY LITERACY SCREENINGS, SO READING STRUGGLES GET CAUGHT EARLY INSTEAD OF YEARS TOO LATE



PARENT NOTIFICATION AND INTERVENTION PLANS, SO FAMILIES KNOW WHEN A CHILD IS READING BELOW GRADE LEVEL AND WHAT THE SCHOOL WILL DO ABOUT IT



INTERVENTIONS, SUCH AS TUTORING AND SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMS, SO THAT STRUGGLING READERS HAVE THE SUPPORTS THEY NEED TO CATCH UP



STRONGER ALIGNMENT BETWEEN TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS AND THE SCIENCE OF READING, SO THAT EDUCATORS ARE READY TO TEACH ON DAY ONE IN THE CLASSROOM



LITERACY COACHING NETWORKS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, SO THAT EDUCATORS HAVE THE SUPPORTS THEY NEED TO CONTINUE TO IMPROVE THEIR INSTRUCTION

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

A bill getting introduced is the starting line, not the finish line. Right now, the READ Act has been dropped in the hopper and handed to the Senate HELP Committee (the committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions).

Here's the part you need to know: Senator Cassidy is the Chairman of that committee and a lead sponsor of the READ Act. The next step for the bill is for his committee to vote on it, something Congress calls a "markup." No markup = no movement. A bill can be the best idea in Washington and still die quietly if it never makes it on the calendar.

So the ask is simple and specific: Senator Cassidy, as Chairman, should schedule the READ Act for a committee markup. Now.

CALL SCRIPT:

Call the Senate HELP Committee R Majority (Cassidy) at 202-224-6770 and D Minority (Sanders) at 202-224-0767

Hi, my name is [Your Name] and I'm a parent advocate calling from [City, State].

I'm calling to thank Senator Cassidy for introducing the READ Act and to ask him, as Chairman of the HELP Committee, to schedule it for a markup as soon as possible.

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I am calling to ask Senator Sanders, as Ranking Member of the HELP Committee, to schedule the READ Act for markup as soon as possible.

As a parent, two things in this bill matter enormously to me: it screens kids for reading problems early, and it requires schools to actually tell parents when our children are falling behind. We can't fix what we don't know about, and too often, parents are kept out of the loop until it's too late.

[Optional: Add brief personal anecdote]

Reading scores are the worst they've been in decades, and this is a real, bipartisan solution sitting right in front of the committee. Introducing the READ Act isn't enough. It needs a vote.

Please ask Senator [Cassidy//Sanders] to put the READ Act on the markup calendar. Our kids can't wait. Thank you.

PRO TIPS:

- 30 seconds is plenty. Staffers tally every call. You don't need to be a policy expert. You need to be a parent who called.
- Make it personal if you can. One line about your own child (e.g. "My daughter has dyslexia and we caught it late") lands harder than any statistic.
- Calling is better than emailing. Phones get counted in real time. If you only have two minutes today, spend them dialing.
- **Then pass it on. Text this number to three parents you know. A wave beats a ripple.**