



Public Hearing Testimony

Speaker:

Rep McCrory

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7344

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE DOUGLAS MCCRORY
SEVENTH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM 2403
HARTFORD, CT 06106
CAPITOL: (860) 240-8585
TOLL FREE: (800) 842-8267
FAX: (860) 240-0067
E-MAIL: Douglas.McCrory@cga.ct.gov

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Education Committee
Public Hearing
Monday, March 12, 2007

Bullets for

**HB-7344 AN ACT CONCERNING RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF
TEACHERS**

- The most recent information stems from “2004-05 District Efforts to Reduce Racial Ethnic and Economic Isolation” which is a biennial report. Of the 166 school districts (excluding the Technical High Schools and Charter Schools not included in the data collections) 163 responded to the question of how many minority teachers were recruited, interviewed, offered a position and ultimately hired.
- In the last 10 years, there has been an extremely small increase of minority educators in the state’s public school system (possibly less than 1%) even though the legislature previously ordered school boards to develop and implement minority teacher recruitment plans to fight racial isolation (*Connecticut Minority Hiring Efforts Show Little Progress – By Linda Conner Lambeck – Connecticut Post – May 16, 2005*).
- Studies have shown that minority students tend to perform better – academically, personally and socially – when taught by teachers from their own diverse teaching staff.

- A recent report suggests that more than 30% of students in Connecticut are minority and less than 7% of Connecticut teachers are (*New England's Journal of Higher Education: Calling minority teachers*).
- Various factors contribute to the difficulty in recruiting and retaining minority/faculty of color. Mainly, preparation and guidance is needed to enter and succeed in college. We have the largest achievement gap in the country and the drop out rate for minority students is 60-70% in some of Connecticut's priority school districts. Couple this with the extremely low minority employment rate/income and the high levels of incarcerated minorities and you have a recipe for disaster in an economy whose minority population is growing at an astonishing rate.
- Inequity in education is one of the primary reasons for the lack of minority teachers. If the state can be successful with implementing programs to assist paraprofessionals in becoming certified teachers and establish a competitive grant program to assist local and regional boards of education to form and operate future teachers' clubs as part of the extracurricular activities at middle and high schools, then the state as a whole would benefit from such an effort.
- Currently, there are 50 school districts that do **not** have any minority school teachers. It would benefit all if every school district in the state would recruit and retain minority educators in order to better diversify students and prepare them to better interact with the real world. This would also help the ongoing fight against racial isolation and profiling.