



Public Hearing Testimony

Speaker:

NM - speaking

TEST: Date: *3/12/07*

Bill Number: *7345*

CONNECTICUT CONFERENCE OF MUNICIPALITIES

TO THE

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

March 12, 2007

Raised House Bill 7345 - "An Act Concerning Great Schools For All"

This bill would establish new grant programs to assist local and regional school districts in raising student achievement through (1) creation of *pilot schools*; (2) creation of *small high schools*; (3) *teacher and principal recruitment and professional development* programs and partnerships; and, (4) creation and implementation of *district-wide school improvement plans*.

These grants would be funded with appropriations of \$500,000 each in FY 08 for the development of the program and then \$7 million each (with the exception of the district-wide school improvement plans, which would be funded at \$6 million) in FY 09 for their implementation.

CCM has concerns about creating and funding new programs on top of the plethora of programs already out there. It might be prudent instead to thoroughly examine existing programs and determine how they could be modified and updated to meet the goals outlined in this bill. However, local officials certainly welcome state assistance in helping to raise student achievement.

Over the last several years, local districts have been inundated with new mandates put forth by the No Child Left Behind Act. Municipalities understand that compliance is necessary, but want to be included in the determination as to how best to achieve the goals. In addition to including representatives of public schools and school districts in the process to develop guidelines for a public school accountability system, CCM urges you to include representatives of local government. Municipal officials bear the primary responsibility for raising revenues to support schools, and should be part of any effort to get more accountability from them.

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For more information please contact Kachina Walsh-Weaver
or Jim Finley at (203) 498-3000.