

Public Hearing Testimony Speaker: Pam Bouley

Date: 3-12-07 Bill Number: 7357

TO: General Assembly Education Committee

**RE: Raised House Bill No. 7357, AN ACT CONCERNING
PARAEDUCATORS**

DATE: March 12, 2007

Senator Gaffey, Representative Fleischmann, and Members
of the Education Committee:

My name is Pam Bouley, and I work as a public school
paraprofessional at Birch Grove School in the Tolland
public school district.

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Member's name

I want to thank the General Assembly for commissioning
last year's study of the role of paraprofessionals in
our public schools. However, I respectfully urge you to
oppose raised House Bill 7857, AN ACT CONCERNING
PARAEDUCATORS. I do not believe that another layer of
credentialing on top of the federal requirements of the
No Child Left Behind Act that does not offer real job
security for paraprofessionals will resolve the crisis
in our state's public schools.

I believe such a mandate will only drive down the
number of paraprofessionals in our schools, which
already face short-staffing and unfilled vacancies. I
believe that what our schools really need are
attainable solutions to the many challenges we face on
the job.

I believe school paraprofessionals are not adequately
compensated for the tremendous impact we make in the
lives of the students we work with each and every day.

I firmly believe that the real solution to closing the
achievement gap for our students and recruiting and
retaining the paraprofessionals our schools depend on
is to support local districts so they can increase our
wages and provide us access to health care. Therefore I
ask you oppose HB 7857.

Thank-you for your time and for hearing my voice on
this critical matter.

Pam Bouley
46 Susan Drive
Tolland , Ct. 06084
Home Telephone: (860) 875-2696