



TESTIMONY
of the
CONNECTICUT CONFERENCE OF MUNICIPALITIES
to the
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

March 10, 2008

Raised Senate Bill 649 “*An Act Concerning School Learning Environment*”

Among other things, **this bill would penalize municipalities, by reducing their education grants, if the local board of education fails to implement a bullying policy.**

CCM appreciates the intent behind this proposal. We all want to work toward the elimination of bullying. The negative ramifications of bullying are well known: bullying contributes to truancy, high school drop out rates, poor grades, and a host of other problems.

However, penalizing the fiscal authority (the town) for the actions, or lack thereof, of the local board of education would not assure that the goal of the bill will be achieved. Local boards of education make independent decisions about the education system – local governments just get handed the bill. This bill would hurt local budgets without necessarily affecting the school system at all – there is no reason to believe that the board of education would get less money as a result. It would, however, hurt property taxpayers.

CCM urges the committee to look at this proposal further and craft a mechanism that would encourage, rather than penalize, local boards of education to properly design and implement a policy to reduce and prevent bullying within the schools in their jurisdiction.

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If you have any questions, please contact Kachina Walsh-Weaver, Senior Legislative Associate of CCM via email kweaver@ccm-ct.org or via phone (203) 498-3026.