



Public Hearing Testimony Speaker:

REP. CATHERINE
ABERCROMBIE

Date: 2/29/08 Bill Number: 5590

State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE CATHERINE F. ABERCROMBIE
EIGHTY-THIRD DISTRICT

64 PARKER STREET
MERIDEN, CT 06450
CAPITOL: (860) 240-8585
TOLL FREE: 1-800-842-8267
E-MAIL: Catherine.Abercrombie@cga.ct.gov

VICE CHAIR
HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

MEMBER
HIGHER EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE
SELECT COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

**Testimony of
Representative Catherine Abercrombie
Before the Education Committee on HB5590 An Act Concerning Special
Education and Instructional Methods Concerning Autism and Other Mental
Disabilities
February 29th, 2008**

Good afternoon chairman Fleischmann, chairman Gaffey and distinguished members of the Education committee. My name is Jason Juall speaking on behalf of Representative Catherine Abercrombie of the 83rd district. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for considering House Bill 5590.

I am in attendance to express my considerable support for House Bill 5590 An Act Concerning Special Education and Instructional Methods Concerning Autism and Other Mental Disabilities.

This bill provides teachers with proper training in educating children with Autism and other mental disabilities and has my sincerest support for the following reasons:

- Since Special Education needs have become a chief concern in teaching practices, we have not taken the time necessary to properly and comprehensively train our teachers to deal with the classroom issues arising while teaching mentally handicapped children.
- With improperly qualified teachers, our mainstream students are being put at a disadvantage; a teacher unable to properly adjust to the needs mentally disabled students jeopardizes the stability of the classroom. Students are readily enough distracted from their curriculum; I believe an unsettled and potentially uncontrolled learning atmosphere further encourages disruption and inattention.
- Teachers that are improperly equipped with the strategies necessary to adjust their teaching style to accommodate mentally disabled children can and will be subjected to unnecessary anxiety which would be further damaging to a positive and convenient scholastic atmosphere for our children.

In closing, I fervently encourage this committee to report favorably on this bill in order to allow our children the opportunity to learn in an environment that is free from unnecessary distraction and allows them to reach their full potential as young scholars and citizens.