



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS
COMMITTEE

Good afternoon Representative Fleischmann, Senator Gaffey, and members of the Education Committee. For the record, I am Diana Urban, State Representative from the 43 District – Stonington and North Stonington. I am here to speak favorably on HB 6565, An Act Concerning Humane Education.

Our children are growing up in an increasingly violent world and yet we expect them to form relationships and friendships based on trust and acceptance of each other. The State Department of Education, in one of their Results Based Accountability (RBA) reports, used a proxy measure for “an atmosphere conducive to learning” and the measure was the number of disruptions in Kindergarten classes. I was pretty surprised that there were enough disruptions to actually use the number legitimately in a study. I was also very disturbed.

Humane Education is presently being taught in a number of states and the evidence is that the incidences of bullying decrease, children show greater empathy for each other, and class room disruptions decrease. This all comes about by teaching children about respect for the earth, animals and each other.

Sometimes we forget that there are children that are never exposed to the love of a puppy or the experience of planting a seed and watching it grow. For many, the simple miracle of life is mired in violence. Often, they believe that the ones to emulate are those who perpetrate the violence around them. Human Education gives them a chance to see the world through different eyes,

I would also like to comment on dissection choice. My son, Lex, opted not to do dissection in his Honors Biology class at Wheeler High School and it caused a lot of angst. After extensive discussion with the Administration he was allowed to use a computer model, however the biology teacher lost no opportunity to point out that he was doing something different, separate him from the class because he was unable to do what the rest of the class was doing and often sent him to another room to do his work.

Lex was a National Merit Scholarship winner, got an 800 on his Biology Achievement test, aced Differential Equations at Stanford University, and went on to a very successful college career. Using the computer model in High School Biology had no negative effect on his academic career whatsoever.

I respectfully request that HB 6565 be voted favorably out of Committee.