

H.B. #6657 Testimony

AN ACT CONCERNING THE REPORTING OF GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS.

To require local and regional boards of education to include in their strategic school profile the number of gifted and talented children enrolled in the district.

I would like to speak in favor of this bill. As President of the Connecticut Association for the Gifted, I am speaking on behalf of our 1,000 plus members, who are parents and educators of gifted children, as well as the approximately 30,000 gifted and talented students in CT, most of whom have not been identified by their school districts. The SDE doesn't have the resources to even enforce the state law to identify gifted and talented students.

CT is one of only eight states in the country which doesn't require services or provide funding for gifted students. Although this committee voted unanimously in support of changing that two years ago, the legislature did not include it in the final budget. Since that time, we at CAG have been focusing our time and resources at the local level, helping teachers and parents meet the needs of their students and children.

We get dozens of emails and phone calls each week asking for information and help. Many of the questions are from parents who want to know what school districts identify and serve gifted students. Although that information is gathered by the SDE, it is not reported anywhere that is accessible to anyone. Requiring the information to be included in the Strategic School Profile would be a helpful step in allowing parents to make a decision about what districts at least identify gifted and talented students. It sends the message to local and regional boards of education that these students have specific needs, just as other special needs students do.

Please vote in support of H.B. #6657, "AN ACT CONCERNING THE REPORTING OF GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS."

Thank You.

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