

March 16, 2009

Senator Gaffey
Representative Fleischmann
Members of the Education Committee

Re: HB 6666

Connecticut Parent Teacher Association (CT PTA) and its over 52,000 members recognize the importance of having highly qualified teachers operating in all of the schools in our state. We also recognize that we are experiencing a shortage of teachers in some of the content areas that are the most critical to our students developing 21st century skills, specifically in the STEM curriculum (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math).

CT PTA support programs and policies for the recruitment and retention of talented and committed educators, with special emphasis placed on ensuring teacher diversity and addressing the special needs of rural and urban areas and CT PTA supports a balanced accountability system that uses multiple measures in order to improve academic achievement for all students.

CT PTA recognizes that just as there is more than one way to measure student success there is more than one way to assess teacher quality. We see HB 6666 as a common sense approach already adopted in neighboring states to help provide quality teachers in shortage areas for the benefit of the children of Connecticut. Maintaining high standards does not have to mean sacrificing flexibility.

Melissa Johnson
President, Connecticut Parent Teacher Association