

TESTIMONY

Before the Executive & Legislative Nominations Committee

February 5, 2009

By Patricia B. Luke

Good afternoon, Senator Looney, Representative Janowski and members of the Committee. I am Patricia Luke of East Hampton, a nominee of Governor Rell, for reappointment as a voting member of the Connecticut State Board of Education. It is my pleasure to be here this afternoon.

You have been provided with a copy of my resume but I would like, briefly, to summarize for you, my background and experience. I am a product of Connecticut's and Florida's public school systems, and North Carolina's and Connecticut's college and university systems. I have almost forty-five years of experience in the education community at the local, state and national levels. I have been a teacher in the public schools and in higher education, and I've been an elected school board member and an association executive working with school board members and school administrators. More recently, I have served on the Connecticut State Board of Education where I have also served on its Policy Committee and chaired its Finance, Audit and Department Matters Committee. I am the parent of three wonderful children who have taught me some of the most important lessons about children, education, and life.

As you can see from my resume, my work with the state school boards' association was focused heavily on public policy issues as was my involvement at the national level where educational standards, testing and curriculum were among the most pressing issues of the time. They remain pressing issues today. However, I continue to believe that our efforts in education in those areas and others, cannot succeed unless we can assure that every child comes to school ready to learn and every teacher comes to school well prepared to teach.

I had a long and exciting work life from which I am now retired. My interest and my work have always been in education and matters related to children. I remain convinced that school practices that really work are not a mystery, but that the concept of a comprehensive educational plan that makes those practices available to every child, is often elusive.

I would be honored to have the opportunity to continue to serve on the State Board of Education and to pursue, with the Board and the Commissioner of Education, a focused agenda for public education that presses forward with the important goals that the Board has set and that I am convinced will make a real difference for Connecticut's children.

That prospect gives me great hope for the future. I am grateful to Governor Rell for her nomination and to you for your consideration.

It would be my pleasure to try to answer any question that you might have for me.

*Patricia B. Luke*