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Testimony of
SHARON PALMER
President of AFT Connecticut
on
SB1195 An Act Concerning School Finance Reform

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Senator Harp, Representative Walker, and Members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Sharon Palmer. I am here representing the 28,000 members of AFT Connecticut and I'd like to talk about Senate Bill 1195—An Act Concerning School Finance Reform; specifically that it be set aside for now.

We support meeting the educational needs of all of Connecticut's public school students through a strong equitable funding formula. We recognize that municipalities are struggling with the covering the costs involved in meeting the diverse educational needs of the students in their communities while balancing the needs of all residents and taxpayers.

As you are probably aware, the State Department of Education created an Ad Hoc Committee to study Education Cost Sharing (ECS) and Choice Funding. This committee was deeply divided on what constitutes appropriate design principles for a new funding system for education within the state.

While we fully understand the need to change Connecticut's educational funding system to something that works for everyone, we are equally certain that this is not a change that should be rushed into, but one that requires careful and considerate deliberation.

We support the continued work of the Ad Hoc Committee to study Education Cost Sharing (ECS) and Choice Funding until strong support for systemic change is attained, and we therefore ask that SB1195 be set aside until the State Department of Education's work is complete.

Thank you.

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