

TESTIMONY

Of Sue Haynie, Norwalk, CT

Regarding S.B. 1195: An Act Concerning School Finance Reform. To replace the state's current mechanism for funding public school education with a long term, sustainable pupil based funding system.

Senators and Representatives of the Appropriations Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony regarding S.B. 1195 directed at replacing the current education funding model.

I am here to support and endorse a more equitable funding system for the children who attend our Connecticut public schools and one that is based upon a simplified, common sense concept that puts students first and takes into account their individual learning needs at the public schools they attend.

I am the Director of NorwalkSEEKS, a non-profit organization with a focus on reading and reading disabilities. I am also a member of a local grassroots organization in Norwalk known as R.Ed APPLES of Norwalk. My testimony today supports the Testimony as written by Lisa Thompson, the R.Ed APPLES Executive Director.

I will restate part of Ms. Thompson's testimony that is summative, namely, "I fear for the children of Connecticut and around the country. And I especially fear for the lower income, at risk children. I fear that they will NOT have the skills necessary to compete for jobs in Connecticut, let alone a global economy. I also fear for Connecticut. Without an educated workforce, companies will not invest and residents will move out. "

Money won't solve all the problems in Connecticut, but surely a more equitable system and funding formula, one that the general public can understand and one that is transparent would make it easier for the State of Connecticut's 169 districts in their efforts to improve student achievement.

I implore the members of the Appropriations Committee to fully review the proposed education funding model. Make it fair. Make it transparent. And make it effective.