

Good evening Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Education committee. My name is **Cheryle Elliott**. I am a **mother of two children with behavioral health issues, IEP's, 504's etc., and a registered voter from Waterbury, CT**. I am here today to testify in support of SB 1038, An Act Concerning Individualized Education Programs.

I am a mother with DiGeorge Syndrome who is having issues to get a fair education for my two children. My son (6) is severely handicapped with a wheelchair and unable to speak. He has DiGeorge syndrome and Myotonic Muscular Dystrophy. My daughter (10) has DiGeorge Syndrome, Open heart(ASD repair)Asthma, BiPolar, Insomnia, and ADHD.

SB 1038 AN ACT CONCERNING INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS

My Concerns are:

- IEP's should have better communication. I had to go through higher grounds to get my daughter back on IEP that failed. With classes $\frac{3}{4}$ through this year, my daughter last week just got a 504 being the ninth child to receive one in her school. The principal did not want to pursue it, but complaining to civil rights finally got one. During the meeting the speech therapist and principal weren't sure on how to fully complete it right. Honestly I don't think they wanted to do it. I pushed and she got it, but I'm not sure if its fully being implemented because I'm still signing bad grades.
- Lack of communication between school and between school and parents. (My son had about 4 incidents in his second year of pre-k). All were brought to DCF attention but were dropped. Even though my son cannot talk I was not aware of these incidents until a few days after a trip to the hospital and doctors' visits. The school was not equipped with handicapped restraints in the bathroom, etc. The personnel were clueless on what things they could do. They said they couldn't restrain even with permission of the parent.

HB 6432 AN ACT CLOSING THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT GAP

- This is a major concern with children who have mental illness in schools. My daughter has DiGeorge genetic syndrome also known as 22q11.2 chromosome deletion. She suffers from ADHD (Attention Deficit Disorder), Insomnia and Bipolar. School barely sees signs of them because I have intervned before they got severe. Doctor's appointments are not excused and school seems to allow things to happen. Like other girls bullying and the teacher went to me," We are here to teach not to council what happens in the playground and comes back into the class." My daughter gets nightmares for worrying about tests and what the other kids are going to do the next day.
- Teachers and counselors should work with the parents even if there is not a concern at school. You never know what a student can do at the last minute for the health of students and teachers. I thank you and appreciate you for taking time to hear what the parents see and feel.

Sincerely,

Cheryle Elliott 59 Arline Drive Waterbury,CT 06705