

Remarks of Andrew Schoefer
Sixth Grade Teacher
Sherman

For the Education Committee
On Senate Bill 24, *(Section # 28)*
(Eliminating the master's degree requirement)

February 28, 2012

Dear Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Education Committee,

My name is Andrew Schoefer, and I am a sixth grade math teacher in Sherman, Connecticut. I am writing to you today, to comment on Senate Bill 24, Section, 28. Upon reading over the proposed bill I have a few concerns regarding some of the upcoming changes that are described. In particular, I have the most concern over Section 28, eliminating the master's degree requirement. As a teacher who began my career right out of college with a bachelor's degree, it was understood that I had ten years to attain my master's degree in order to keep my position as a fifth grade teacher. Even though there was some pressure to obtain that degree, I liked that the profession I joined kept such high standards for those who chose to be a part of it. My first year of teaching was devoted solely to learning everything I could in the classroom. I planned ahead and began my master's degree my second year, and by the end of my third year I had received a master's degree in science, which gave me another specialization in elementary education. Because I had to earn a master's degree, it not only helped me become more well-rounded, and a better teacher, but it gave me a specialization in a subject area.

Teachers need to be educated. I believe all teachers in the state of Connecticut should have to obtain a master's degree. If teachers are not held to this standard then education in our state will become watered down. Right now all teachers must obtain a master's degree. This keeps the job market for educational positions in our state equal because everyone is at that the same level. Once a master's degree is no longer a requirement districts with financial concerns will be more willing to hire those with lesser degrees, leaving teachers with advanced degrees at a disadvantage. Teachers should not have to worry about jobs because they are too educated.

In summation, I strongly urge you to reconsider Section 28 of the proposed bill. I feel it is of extreme importance to maintain the high standards we have set forth for education in our state.

Thank you for your consideration,