

*Remarks of Dino DeMonti
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West Hartford*

**Before the Education Committee
On S.B. No. 24 – AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATIONAL *COMPETITIVENESS***

February 21, 2012

Good afternoon Senator Stillman and Representative Fleischman, and members of the Education Committee. My name is Dino DeMonti. I have been a Science teacher for the past 10 years, and currently work in West Hartford. I am also a graduate student working toward a Master's Degree. I came here today to submit verbal testimony regarding the proposed bill #24, particularly the elimination of the Masters requirement. It's not easy working full time and taking classes, however I assure you it is valuable. I am learning new things every day and implementing these techniques successfully with my students, such as using Inquiry based learning cycles.

I feel this bill does a good job of only one thing. It fuels a fire of popular belief that our children are being educated by unqualified, incompetent teachers who simply need to show up in order to collect a pay check. These teachers are stagnant and never change. I challenge any of you to find me a school full of unqualified people who are doing this. Teaching is more of a calling than anything else at times, and as educators we will always accept this. We chose this profession because we believe in the importance of what we do. For our governor to humiliate and disrespect us with a bill that paints a vivid picture to the public of this fictitious school where my colleagues and I are ineffectively teaching really hurts and is downright rude. I know that if you have stepped in any of our CT schools recently, there is absolutely no way you could agree with these ridiculous visions of our classrooms.

Why then, once again, do you want to focus attention on measures that will certainly not fix our schools? The idea of attempting to create lifelong learners, using teachers who have not committed to education themselves, is preposterous. How can we foster a value in education with the public, when our governor is devaluing it for the people who teach our children? If we are blaming our education problems on the unqualified teachers, why would we eliminate a requirement for furthering their education? Ask yourselves, does that even make sense? I speak

from experience that furthering my education has made me a successful and dynamic teacher in my classroom, and I know it has also done this for my colleagues as well.

This point demonstrates another example of how this bill falls short on simple logic. So please let us do our jobs and focus your attention on solutions to problems that will actually make a difference in our schools. Please stop fooling the public by painting a false picture of our schools and the dedicated professionals that fill them. And if you actually believe that teachers are not teaching, and schools are full of unqualified professionals, do yourself a favor and visit one. I strongly urge you to vote no and focus attention on real solutions, because in your heart you know this will have no effect whatsoever on student success.