

*Remarks of
Ellen G. Shea
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**Before the Education Committee
On S.B. No. 24, AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS
*Regarding teacher evaluation***

February 21, 2012

Good afternoon Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Education Committee.

My name is Ellen G. Shea, and I am presently a second grade teacher in Danbury, Connecticut. I have 13 years of experience in Connecticut. I am here today to comment on Senate Bill 24, regarding teacher evaluation.

I urge the committee to maintain the high standards that Connecticut teachers currently meet to hold a professional teaching certification. The master's degree requirement is an essential component to becoming a professional educator. Taking these courses once I was a classroom teacher was so valuable. I was able to draw on real experiences with my students to enhance my ability to plan and deliver lessons.

Please consider expanding the basis for certification beyond just one principal's evaluation/observation. Take into consideration years of experience, as well as degrees obtained. One person's observation should not be the sole snapshot of that teacher's ability. Teachers and administrators should have some input in developing a new system of teacher evaluation.

The teaching profession depends on collegiality. These changes will impact how teachers work together for a common goal. The willingness of teachers to share concerns with their colleagues is what enables a teacher to grow professionally. This plan could ruin that spirit and change the climate in public schools.

We are counting on you to create a fair system for public education to move forward.

Thank you.