

*Remarks of Mary Edwards  
High School Science Teacher  
West Hartford*

**For the Education Committee  
On Senate Bill 24  
AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS**

**February 21, 2012**

My name is Mary Edwards and I have over 20 years experience teaching science. Never have I felt so battered and demoralized as I have as a result of your possible changes to teacher tenure and certification.

I earned a MEd. in Earth Science, Chemistry and Physics. I went on to earn a BS in Science Teaching and Teacher Education. Your proposed changes would eliminate the need for advanced degrees at a time when the elected leadership of Connecticut professes that education is important. Does this make sense? Not to me it doesn't.

I also have a National Certification for Earth Science teaching at the secondary level. The proposed elimination of this advanced certification is ludicrous. Once again may I ask in the sense of this?

Your recent attacks on teaching and teachers leave much to be desired, and is based on not understanding what is truly the issue. Connecticut has the widest income gap of the country. Ask anyone and they will tell you that income and family structure are more important for student achievement and education than tenure could ever be. Teachers cannot and should not be made the scapegoats of something of which we have no control over and that is home.

I would postulate that the reason for your current attacks are on teachers is simply because certification and tenure is tangible. Yet these same changes you propose will do nothing but weaken the education system of Connecticut and at the same time ignore what is the cause of student achievement.

When you spend time in a classroom, and I mean real time, not some publicity stunt. When you spend time talking to teachers instead of scolding us; only then will you come to realize the impact you will have on the future of education in Connecticut. I will tell you right now that these proposed changes will do more damage than good. You will find that should these changes take effect that the same problems will exist and then what will you do?

And that, ladies and gentlemen is a good question for you to ponder.

