

*Remarks of Nick Banks
English Teacher
Trumbull High School*

**Before the Education Committee
On S.B. No. 24, AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS
Section 31 - Teacher Salaries Based on Certificates**

February 21, 2012

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

My name is Nick Banks and I'm an English teacher at Trumbull High School. I am here today to comment on Senate Bill 24, Section 31.

I am writing to you today because I have serious problems with the entire Senate Bill 24 and the assured destruction of a first-class public education system in our state, but I will focus my comments on the new plan for teacher salary schedules being based on certification levels and not degree or years of experience.

We all want the best life has to offer. We want the best homes, cars, and schools. We also want the best professionals available to us, whether they are doctors, lawyers, mechanics, travel agents, etc. When it comes to teachers, short-sighted individuals believe that teaching is not an art, but an easily measurable job that can be done by anyone. In reality, very few can teach. The rate of attrition in the profession is extremely high. After three years of teaching, one in three teachers will leave the profession. In five years, only one teacher that started will still be teaching. With statistics like these, only the best preserve and answer the call.

The best teachers are also life-long learners who invest their salaries and free time into becoming better educators. I currently have three degrees plus an additional fifteen credits. Very few teachers in my building have reached this mark, but all are currently required to get a master's degree inside of ten years in order to maintain their certification. Senate Bill 24 would eliminate this provision and offer no impetus for teachers to become more versed in their subject matter or learn cutting-edge techniques to improve student performance. If teachers are paid based on certification requirements, I fear that few teachers will have the drive or most importantly, finances, to pursue greater degrees of learning.

This bill, authored by people who despise teachers and who are working through old grievances against teachers in their past, will not help anyone. Most importantly, children will suffer over these petty attacks against teachers. We will remember who stood beside teachers in this fight, and we will certainly remember those who fought to downgrade the education in our state. Please consider siding with intelligence over stupidity, credibility over conjecture, and morality over personal vendettas.

Thank you for your time.

Nick Banks
26 Meghan Lane
Shelton, CT
06484