

*Remarks of Anna Pirri
7th Grade Math Teacher
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**Before the Education Committee
On Senate Bill 24 AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS
Section 28 and 31, Professional Development and Teacher Salaries**

February 21, 2012

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

My name is Anna Pirri and I'm a 7th grade math teacher in Ridgefield, CT. I am here today to comment on Senate Bill 24, Section 28 and 31.

I have been a teacher in Connecticut for 10 years and previously worked as a consulting actuary in an employee benefit consulting firm. In both professions, continuing education is crucial to performing at a professional level and achieving success in the field. Success for teachers includes helping each student perform at their optimum level. This is especially important at this time when technology is improving so rapidly and the demands on students are constantly changing. As a teacher, I constantly integrate new technology (such as SmartBoards), new viewpoints (such as differentiated instruction), and new curriculum (such as the Common Core) into my classroom. Without crucial continuing education or professional development, this would not occur in a timely manner. Any new teacher should be required to uphold these same standards and be dedicated to learning whatever is necessary to benefit the education of the students. With fewer requirements for future teachers, the students will have teachers who are less prepared and knowledgeable. By lessening these opportunities and the requirements of new teachers, teachers as a whole in America will continue to be considered less valued and revered. Our students will also continue to fall further behind in the global community.

In addition, teachers should be paid commensurate for their knowledge and years of experience and hard work. This is the norm in all professions, especially in corporate America. I would feel insulted as a teacher who has been working 10 years to know that I am as valued as a first-year teacher without a master's degree or any additional training than a bachelor's degree. Unfortunately, I would consider leaving the profession despite the enjoyment that I share with my students almost daily.

Please consider keeping the high standards that we expect of teachers in the State of Connecticut.