

*Remarks of Jeff Goldenberg
Elementary School Teacher*

Before the Education Committee

On S.B. No. 24, AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS

February 21, 2012

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

My name is Jeff Goldenberg and I am writing this letter today to comment on Senate Bill 24, Section 31, teachers salaries based on certification. I am writing to you as both an elementary school teacher and a parent of an elementary school student. I have 16 years of experience working with elementary and middle school children. Education is extremely important to me and my family. In fact, it is one of the main reasons I moved to Connecticut. Connecticut has always been a leader in the field of education and it saddens me to see what may happen to one of the shining examples and inspirations for the rest of the country.

It would be a huge error in judgment to not advance teachers in steps and salary for earning advanced degrees. By doing so, you are not valuing teachers advancing their knowledge in their areas of content and staying current with educational practices. It is incredibly ironic to decide not to value the education of the teachers in the classroom.

Most career fields encourage their employees to earn advanced degrees, and in return, reward their employees with some sort of compensation. This makes it a desirable career choice and creates a working environment in which new ideas and practices are applied.

When I was hired, I was promised compensation within the salary scale for the level of education that I had earned. I made the commitment to teach in Connecticut with this understanding. If you pass Bill 24, you are not fulfilling this commitment to both me and the other 45,000 teachers in Connecticut who have also spent their personal time and money to earn these degrees. Is the state going to reimburse us for these educational expenses and the loss of compensation should this bill pass?

Connecticut has always prioritized education. I urge the committee to show the teachers in Connecticut that their advanced degrees are valued and worthy of compensation. I urge the committee to show students that Connecticut values lifelong learning by supporting their teachers continuing their education. I urge the committee to show parents that Connecticut values their children's education by rewarding teachers that are applying current educational practices. In conclusion, I would like to strongly urge the committee not to pass Bill 24. It will not only hurt the extremely committed teachers of the state, but the children they love and teach each and every day. Thank you.