

*Remarks of  
Jill Williams, Science Teacher  
Vernon School District*

**Before the Education Committee  
On S.B. No. 24-AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS**

**February 21, 2012**

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

My name is Jill Williams, and I am a science teacher in Vernon. I am here today to comment on Senate Bill 24, Section 31 regarding teacher salaries based on certification. The main reason why I wanted to pursue a master's degree was to broaden my knowledge in the field of biology to benefit my students' learning in the classroom. Every day in the classroom I strive to give each student the best education possible regardless of his/her background or socioeconomic status. However, due to factors beyond any teacher's control, disparities among students will exist that will affect how well students do on high-stakes tests such as CAPT.

Making teacher salaries in Connecticut based on certification level would be a travesty, especially since that certification level would be based partially on how well students do on a high-stakes test. We as teachers did not enter the profession because of the attraction of a high salary, but I believe that we deserve a salary that is not going to fluctuate from year to year because of factors beyond our control. This concept of linking salary level to certification level will also prevent school districts from attracting bright and talented people to this profession and retaining them for the long term. This idea would also discourage teachers from earning degrees beyond their bachelor's degree because higher education is removed from the equation for certification level. In what other profession are experience and education completely disregarded? Society needs to elevate the epithet "teacher" back to where it should be as a profession instead of downgrading it as simply just another job. In the best interest of our students in this state, certification and salaries should be based on experience and advanced degrees rather than arbitrary or subjective factors that would cause teacher certification level demotion. Without well-educated teachers who feel valued, students will not be able to compete in a global society in the future. The quality of education in our state will greatly diminish.

Please strongly consider rejecting the proposal in SB 24 regarding basing teacher salaries on certification. Thank you for your consideration.