

Remarks of Kristen Record
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Before the Program Review and Investigations Committee
S.B. No. 108, AAC the Creation of an Educator Professional Standards Board Task Force

March 13, 2012

Good afternoon Senator Fonfara and Representative Rowe, and members of the Program Review and Investigations Committee. My name is Kristen Ann Record. I am a physics teacher at Bunnell High School in Stratford, CT and the 2011 Connecticut Teacher of the Year. I am here today to comment on Raised Bill No. 108.

The bill before you calls for the appointment of 16 people to a task force to make recommendations about the creation of an educator professional standards board. I support this bill, and believe that Connecticut's teachers are uniquely positioned to provide critical insight related to the creation of this board, as well as to educator regulation in general.

As an experienced teacher, I have had the opportunity to chair two New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Self-Studies for my school in the area of Instruction, and have served on an accreditation visiting team to evaluate a high school in Providence, RI. I am not alone in doing this, as hundreds of Connecticut teachers volunteer each year to serve in these capacities. Through these professional opportunities I have thoroughly studied, reflected on, and observed how the quality of instruction is directly related to a student's achievement of a school's 21st century learning expectations.

As the Connecticut Teacher of the Year, I have travelled across the country to engage in issues of teaching and education excellence, and regularly discuss education policy matters with teachers from every state. As such, I am keenly aware of the diversity of models used across the United States for regulating educators.

Due to my demonstrated content expertise, I am also regularly consulted by the State Department of Education when certificate decisions related to applications for cross-endorsements in science need to be made.

Though my position on the Legislative Task Force for Secondary School Reform I have also seen how issues of certification policy and administration are intertwined with establishing rigorous high school graduation requirements.

Teachers, such as myself, who have mentored student interns, student teachers, and beginning teachers have first-hand, practical knowledge about the course work and experiences that are vital parts of teacher preparation programs and that are crucial links to teaching excellence. My education research expertise allows me to know that the lack of a minor in the subject matter taught can account for 20% of the variation in National Assessment of Education Progress (NEAP) scores and that advanced degrees which are specific to the subject area taught are associated with higher student achievement.

Simply put, veteran teachers bring a variety of experiences and perspectives to the discussion of professional standards that others cannot. Teachers, as a stakeholder group, sincerely want to have a role in shaping our profession. As such, I strongly support the creation of a task force to make recommendations regarding an educator professional standards board, and advocate for the inclusion of classroom teachers as enumerated in the raised bill.