



Testimony of  
**Melodie Peters, President**  
**AFT Connecticut, AFL-CIO**

Education Committee  
March 5, 2013

Good afternoon Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischman and members of the Education Committee. My name is Melodie Peters and I am the President of AFT Connecticut, a diverse state federation union of nearly 29,000 public and private sector employees including state employees, nurses, other health care workers, teacher, and other school personnel. I am here to testify briefly on HB 6503, SB 997, SB 1000 and SB 1002.

**HB 6503 An Act Concerning Public School Pool Safety**

We are supporting the recommendations in the bill, but express concern about the possible shifting of the PE students so that you end up over populating the other PE classes. Testimony has been submitted by Kristen Byrd, one of our PE Teachers.

**SB 997 An Act Establishing an Education Preparation Advisory Council**

We agree with the concept of a committee that will develop a system of feedback regarding the preparation of future teachers. The data regarding teacher retention, educator preparedness, the effectiveness of recruitment efforts, especially the ability of high academically performing students and feedback from school districts regarding the readiness and effectiveness of such program graduate is a commendable choice for the committee.

We have concerns regarding using teacher evaluation and student achievement data without appropriate safe guards and without any consideration of the placement these students find themselves in.

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**SB 1000 An Act Concerning the Establishment of an Academically Gifted Advancement Program**

Generally we support but have concerns in Section 1b2 and question why this language is needed. We are unaware of any student that is required to enroll in grade 12 as long as they meet the course requirements.

Also we disagree that rewarding individuals by providing scholarships for graduating early is not necessary. These students are most likely recipients of scholarships and grants. What it does not do is recognize students that are not identified as gifted and talented but graduate early.

**SB 1002 An Act Concerning Community Schools**

AFT-CT strongly supports this bill because we do believe it does take a village, and if primary needs of family and children are addressed, the more receptive the children will be.

It creates definitions of community partners, what community engagement in education means as well as and the establishment and governance of community schools with the goal of creating these partners to provide needed services to students and families at these schools.

Thank you for your hard work and this opportunity to testify.