



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE MARILYN GIULIANO
TWENTY-THIRD ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 4200
300 CAPITOL AVENUE
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591

TOLL FREE: (800) 842-1423
CAPITOL: (860) 240-8700
Marilyn.Giuliano@housegop.ct.gov

ASSISTANT MINORITY LEADER

MEMBER
EDUCATION COMMITTEE
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE

To: Sen. Bye, Rep. Willis - HEEA Chairs

Sen. Boucher, Rep. LeGeyt - HEEA Ranking Members

Re: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF PROPOSED HOUSE BILL 5911 - An Act Concerning the Teaching of Gifted and Talented Children

Date: February 14, 2013

Thank you for offering a public hearing on proposed House Bill 5911, An Act Concerning the Teaching of Gifted and Talented Children.

As a state, we have begun the process of education reform including a targeted narrowing of CT's achievement gap. As we seek to address the deficiencies of our highest need schools, proposed HB 5911 asks us to collectively consider how to train and incentivize our teachers to reach our brightest students as well. As a long-time educator, I have an acute awareness of the limited support currently offered for our high-potential and high-ability students. In fact, most teachers do not engage in coursework on the nature and needs of gifted students in college preparation programs. It is the intent of this proposed legislation to encourage students in teacher preparation programs to take coursework related to educating high-ability and high-potential students - and to offer incentives to those who seek this specialized training.

The facts of Connecticut's current fiscal circumstances as outlined in the Governor's budget address last week cause me to recommend against the creation of certification standards for the education of our high-potential, high-ability students at this time. Rather, I suggest the committee's consideration of a proposal to create the following to incentivize teacher preparation efforts in the domain of gifted education:

- a "concentration" of not less than four (4) graduate courses specifically focused upon teacher preparation for the education of gifted/talented students;
- a transcript entry denotes successful completion of said concentration;
- that this concentration creates a teacher eligibility status;
- eligibility for strategic compensation for the attainment of this teacher status may include but is not limited to daily/weekly school time directed to planning and collaboration for embedded enrichment, district stipend for eligible teachers, etc.

Admittedly, this is a modest step forward but one in the right direction in recognition of addressing the needs of our most able students, and in recognition of Connecticut's current fiscal crisis. This initiative, if successful, would ideally be expanded at a later point of fiscal prosperity.

Thank you for your deliberations on the merits of this proposal.