

HB 6329

Committee on Children
Room 011, Capitol Building
Hartford, CT 06106

I am a science teacher in New Haven and while I support to spirit of this bill, I am writing to object to some of the new language in this bill. Students should be allowed to opt out of required dissections if they have a conscientious objection, if they have parental approval, and if they notify the teacher in writing in advance. This should only apply to students in required courses such as biology and not electives such as human anatomy and physiology, both of which I have taught. There is no equivalent substitute for dissections. The specimens look and feel very different from plastic models, diagrams, or even photographs because every individual is unique. Being able to identify organs based on anatomical features is a skill that translates into 21st century skills because it requires students to learn defining characteristics and how to sift through similar but distinct data sets. The experience of dissection aids in building this skill that using books, models, or simulations cannot.

Please amend the bill to include the requirements of conscientious objection, parental approval, and advance written notification to the teacher. Please also indicate that while other activities may be substituted, they are not equivalent.

Sincerely,

Gail Emilsson