

TESTIMONY ON RAISED BILL 6501

Submitted by Parents Across America-Connecticut

March 5, 2013

Chairpersons Bartolomeo and Urban and members of the Children Committee:

Parents Across America is a non-profit, non-partisan grassroots organization that connects parents and pro-public education advocates from across the United States to share ideas and work together to improve our public schools. Parents Across America-CT consists of public school parents from all corners of the state.

The Parents Across America – Connecticut Chapter strongly supports the content and spirit of Raised House Bill 6501, ***AN ACT CONCERNING PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT***.

PAA-CT understands that parents must have a significant voice in policies at the school, district, state and national levels.

We are not just “consumers” or “customers” but knowledgeable, necessary partners in any effective reform effort.

Greater parental involvement is key to ensuring children take full advantage of the benefits of public education. Promoting full participation by parent and guardians not only benefits the individual child but helps to strengthen the entire family, school and community.

Multiple studies, including efforts conducted by the National PTA have clearly revealed that, “When families, schools, and communities work together, student achievement improves, teacher morale rises, communication increases and family, school, and community connections multiply.”

The barriers to greater parental involvement are equally well understood.

Many parents and guardians can simply not get the time off from work to fully engage in their children’s education.

House Bill 6501 ensures that parents, guardians and grandparent having custody of a school age child are given the time necessary to engage in the education of their children. By requiring employers to provide up to twenty hours of parental leave annually, the Connecticut General Assembly will be removing a key barrier to greater parental involvement.

The proposed legislation is a common-sense, balanced approach to opening vital pathways to greater parental involvement.

PAA-CT applauds the Committee for raising this piece of legislation and urges passage.

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