



Testimony of  
**Stephen McKeever, First Vice President**  
**AFT Connecticut, AFL-CIO**

Education Committee  
March 5, 2013

**HB 6501 AN ACT CONCERNING PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT**

Good afternoon Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban and members of the Committee for Children. My name is Steve McKeever and I am First Vice President of AFT Connecticut, a diverse state federation union of nearly 29,000 public and private sector employees including state employees, nurses, healthcare workers, teachers and other school personnel. I am here today to testify in favor of HB 6501, An Act Concerning Parental Engagement.

We wholeheartedly support this bill. This bill allows for parents to leave their work to attend their child's concert, parent-teacher conferences and other such things. When a child works hard in school to prepare for a concert or a play then looks into the audience and sees his/her parent there, it makes that child proud.

As a high school teacher with 17 years of experience, I can tell you first hand that the students who were most successful academically, socially and emotionally were those whose parents were involved in their child's education. When a parent feels a connection with their child's teacher and school, they are more likely to come forward and support the child, especially in times when things are not going so well for the child.

Educators and legislators alike are very concerned with eliminating the achievement gap. While not everyone agrees on how to do this, one thing which we all agree is that parental involvement is essential. HB 6501 will help to eliminate one of the many barriers of parental involvement.

AFT Connecticut  
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