

Bishop SB 374

My name is Edelyn Bishop and I am a resident of Portland , CT. I currently hold a baccalaureate degree in Nursing, a masters degree in Nursing, and I am currently in an MBA program. I say this not to brag, but rather to reinforce the importance I have in education for me and my family. I also have been a psychiatric nurse for over 23 years. I work in the acute behavioral health area of an emergency room here in CT. So I see mentally ill children come through our ER on a weekly basis. I homeschooled my children for a time span of 15 years combined. My children were, and still are, active in Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, town sports, weekly church groups, and were quite involved with The Connecticut Homeschool Network, a wonderful organization who provided even more activities for our children. Homeschooled children come from families who are VERY invested in their educational AND emotional well being. As of this year both of my children are in private school, are on the honor roll, and my daughter is a member of the honor society. They excel at all they do because of homeschooling, and have a very close bond with myself and my husband. There is absolutely no NEED to target homeschool families to have to engage in this "forced" psychological testing. For that matter even public school children. Annually pediatricians do evaluate children during annual physicals, and teachers see their students everyday. There are already systems in place to address concerns for children on an individual basis as needed in CT should there warrant a need. That's what MD evaluations and parent teacher conferences are for and both of these people are mandated to report to DCF any questions of abuse and evaluations will be performed on an AS NEEDED BASIS, not when the Department of Education or The Justice Department decides to violate parents rights across the board because of the negligent actions of a few. It is a violation of parents rights, violation of HIPPA laws, and random evaluations like this can put unnecessary stress on children UNNECESSARILY!!! It reminds me of the saying, "Don't fix it if its not broken". Homeschooling families have a powerfully positive system in place in positive socialization experiences and superb 1:1 education. The Department of Education needs to take care of their own problems within their system and STOP BULLYING homeschooling families once and for all. Our system WORKS. This is a waste of tax dollars that can be better spent in fixing the problems in your school systems that do lead children to having mental health issues, ie: extremely large classroom sizes, bullying problems that are not managed properly, coming home to hours and hours of homework leading to depression and anxiety, leading to families inability to spend any quality time together. These are the issues you should be worried about. I ask that my testimony be read as a resident of the State of Connecticut completely against S.B. 374. Thank you.

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