

Dear Senators and Representatives,

As a concerned Connecticut parent of four and grandparent of nine, I would like to submit my position against passage of proposed Bill No. 374. This testimony may be read at the March 8 public hearing.

S.B. No. 374 is an unjust and uncalled-for invasion of the rights of both public school families and home-school families for three primary reasons.

1) The bill would force (“require”) parents to submit their children to psychological evaluation by an unspecified and state-selected representative of the health profession. This far over-reaches the purpose of the State Board of Education, which is to provide an equal, that is public, education to children, not to oversee their psychological health. Requiring children to undergo these invasive evaluations violates the parental right to monitor to which ideologies regarding healthcare their children are exposed at young ages. Furthermore, the materials used and questions asked during these evaluations may in fact violate the conscience of the parents whose children are being examined.

2) The bill is so vague that it leaves open-ended the question of to whom access to the results of these evaluations would be given. The phrase “the results of which shall be disclosed only to the child’s parent or guardian”, in no way protects the family from disclosure of confidential medical information to the state should the physician (who is state-appointed) deem it necessary.

In short, this bill contains a poorly defined requirements that violate parents’ rights as the primary educators of their children. While I commend the public school system for providing services to previously diagnosed children with special needs, the state should leave the question of diagnoses to the parents and their freely chosen healthcare professionals.

Sincerely yours,

Joseph Congdon