

March 12, 2014

Senator Andrea Stillman  
Representative Andy Fleischmann  
Senator Antonietta Boucher  
Representative Tim Ackert

Members of the Education Committee:

The MetroHartford Alliance serves as the Region's economic development leader and the City's Chamber of Commerce. Our investors include businesses of all sizes, health care providers, institutions of higher education, and the Region's municipalities. Our mission is to ensure that the Region competes aggressively and successfully for jobs, capital, and talent so that it thrives as one of the country's premier places for all people to live, work, play, and raise a family.

I write to urge the defeat of HB 5078. One of the Alliance's five key strategies is to ensure that the Region retains and recruits talented individuals with a specific focus on ensuring opportunity for those who are raised in the Region. To achieve that strategy, the Alliance has sustained a historical focus by the private sector on assisting Hartford Public School students. Recent examples of that focus include our role in launching and strengthening Achieve!Hartford, the local education foundation that has been a critical leader in addressing the achievement gap between Hartford students and those in other districts.

Our opposition to HB 5078 is grounded in the fundamental reality that, for a Region to compete successfully for jobs in a global economy, it must have an indigenous workforce that possesses the skills required by employers in the diverse disciplines of advanced manufacturing, financial services, health care, and higher education. Only by demonstrating that its local graduates possess those skills will the Region secure the types of quality employment opportunities demanded by its current and future residents.

Connecticut has a long history of leading the nation with its highly educated workforce and of its schools adapting their curricula to ensure that the State maintains that critically important reputation. Indeed, Connecticut parents expect students to be held to rigorous standards with the knowledge that their daughters and sons, by seeking to meet or surpass such standards, will be in the best position possible to achieve their professional and personal dreams.

To ensure that Connecticut remains attractive to private sector employers and that its young talent is prepared to pursue their dreams and careers successfully, we urge the defeat of HB 5078. Please call me at 860-728-2277 with any questions or requests for information.

Sincerely,

