

Testimony for the Senate Education Committee

March 12, 2014

SB 423 – AN ACT CONCERNING STUDENT PRIVACY AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE ARMED SERVICES VOCATIONAL APTITUDE BATTERY

SUPPORT

Senator Stillman, Representative Fleishman and distinguished members of the Education Committee, my name is Ann Evans. As a proud parent of two I'm writing to support Senate Bill 423, An Act Concerning Student Privacy and the Administration of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). SB 423 will uphold the rights of parents to give their consent before a school hands over their child's ASVAB results and other personal information to a third party.

At the moment, the only time student information is leaving the schoolhouse doors without providing for parental consent is in the case of the ASVAB. Many parents are under the impression that their child's private information is safeguarded, due to the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). But incredibly (FERPA) does not apply to ASVAB test scores and personal information (including my child's Social Security Number) because the military administers the test and these records are not deemed to be school records. I was astonished to learn about this practice when my children were attending Northwestern Regional High School in the 2000s. A group of parents and I responded by writing letters to district officials until eventually they decided to stop administering the ASVAB altogether.

But schools that choose to administer the ASVAB can still do so while protecting the privacy of their students. For example, in Torrington, the high school selects Option 8 when it administers the ASVAB (Option 8 refers to an administrative procedure that prevents disclosure of the student's test results to the military). However, it is simply unrealistic to expect all districts in the state to voluntarily do the same thing. That's why we need you to support Senate Bill 423. By supporting this bill, you will be upholding both the dignity of parents and the privacy of students across Connecticut.

I thank you for your time.


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