



## State of Connecticut

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

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**ASSISTANT REPUBLICAN LEADER**

**MEMBER**  
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### ***Testimony in Support of HB 5331, An Act Concerning the Implementation of the Revisions to the PEAC Guidelines & HB 5078, An Act Imposing a Moratorium on the Implementation of the Common Core State Standards***

Good afternoon Chairman Fleischmann, Chairwoman Stillman, Ranking Member Boucher and Ranking Member Ackert. For the record I am Jason Perillo, State Representative from the 113<sup>th</sup> District representing a portion of the City of Shelton.

For my part, I believe in local control of the process of educating our children. Common Core is a top-down system dictated from Washington D.C. which filters down through bureaucratic channels. It is being implemented under pains to avoid public input from those it will impact the most, and that should raise everyone's eyebrows.

The Connecticut State Board of Education adopted what has come to be known as the "Common Core" standards at a board meeting on July 7, 2010. These standards are subject based education standards designed to prepare students in grades K-12 for higher education, and for the workplace.

We are told that the central thinking behind Common Core is the imparting of real world knowledge and skills to help students' preparation for college and careers.

Common Core is meant to go hand-in-hand with Smarter Balanced Standardized Testing which measures the growth of students in meeting the new standards. It is a computer-based mastery test which is scheduled to launch during the 2014-15 school year.

Connecticut adopted the Common Core standards only through the action of the State Board of Education, and without the consent of the state legislature. This means that this massive curriculum overhaul was put in place without the public hearings that would have allowed parents, teachers, and other stakeholders to have their voices heard.

There may very well be a great deal of merit in the Common Core curriculum. There may be much that ought to be questioned. The way we begin to examine such a tremendous reform with so many different moving parts is to hold public hearings where these issues can be discussed and examined. Thankfully we are now doing that. The next step is to put in place a moratorium on implementing Common Core until the State Department of Education has been required to conduct an investigation as to the impact of implementing these new standards on school districts throughout the state. We should also prevent the expenditure of funds toward the implementation of Common Core until this evaluation takes place. Responsible stewardship for our children, parents and the state's education system should require no less.

Concerning the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC) evaluation standards, we should reduce the number of formal classroom evaluations to one per school year, reduce the number of goals to be established by each educator to one, streamline data management requirements at the classroom level and ensure data protection from unauthorized users, and create a subcommittee of classroom teachers to share obstacles they encounter in the implementation of the teacher evaluation program for the district and create a report of recommendations to be submitted to the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council

It is critical to know what the impact to the students and the classroom experience is before taking action. Additionally, there is significant expense attached to these reforms, and Governor Malloy has yet to draft a successful application for federal Race to the Top grant funds to offset these costs, which leaves the state financing early portions on its own. Therefore, it is also in our financial interest to monitor this process more closely and to evaluate before we implement.

The state has not had a very successful rollout of Common Core to date. It will cost \$14.65 million to implement over the next two years, and the State Department of Education announced, then walked back a plan to spend \$1 million with a public relations firm to promote Common Core – it is alarming that the State Department of Education felt it necessary for tax dollars to be spent on propaganda promoting this plan, and that alone sends up warning flags about its potential inadequacy.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jason Perillo  
State Representative  
*113<sup>th</sup> District*  
JP/djw