

Name: Alba Aillon

S.B. No. 942 AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE  
GOVERNOR CONCERNING EDUCATION.

---

Good afternoon. My name is Alba Aillon. I live in Danbury with my family. My children attend Danbury public schools.

Thank you for allowing me this time to speak. I am here to ask you to withdraw the proposed change to Section 16 of Bill 942.

My children, George and Andrew, both participate in several Education Connection Interdistrict Cooperative Grant Programs. I sign my children up for as many interdistrict grant programs as possible. They are such wonderful programs. The children learn so much about important topics. They learn writing by working with published authors. They learn science by exploring animals. They learn social studies in multicultural programs, where they see ethnic artistic presentations, read stories, hear music and make foods from around the world.

Last year, my son George participated in Immigration Nation, where he learned about the contributions of all our country's immigrants, from Colonial Americans to current day refugees. This spring, he will start SCOPE, where he will have the unique opportunity to participate in hands-on health care career exploration. My younger son Andrew just started Science Saturdays, where he will work with

science teachers and create all kinds of interesting experiments that will help him love science even more than he already does.

I am a hardworking Danbury parent who cares deeply about my children's education. I want them to have every opportunity to succeed. I have seen the interdistrict grant programs in action. I know firsthand how valuable they are, not only to my children, but to hundreds of other children in our region of the state. The programs give our children an opportunity to spend time with children from other school districts. This is important because it broadens their horizon. It helps them to see that the world is a big place, with lots of different people in it. They make friends with children who are from many diverse backgrounds. If they didn't attend these programs, they would not understand so much about cultures other than their own. They would not make friends with other children who come from different backgrounds. I have learned from my children's experience in the interdistrict cooperative grant programs that decreasing racial and ethnic isolation and increasing academic achievement are so important to their future.

Parents like me believe that this is true for our children in Danbury and other communities in our region, and not just in Hartford. All of our children should benefit from this funding. I ask that you will withdraw the proposed change to Section 16 of Bill 942.

Thank you.