

Names: Mukti Niha and Harmony Sturdivant

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

Good afternoon. My name is Mukti Niha. I am here with Harmony Sturdivant.

We live in Naugatuck and attend Naugatuck High School.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. We are here to ask you to withdraw the proposed change to Section 16 of Bill 942.

We participate in an Education Connection interdistrict cooperative grant program called Preserving our Histories of Connecticut Veterans. We call this POH. POH is a great program. A group of students at our school meet with about 80 other high school students from different towns throughout the year to learn about our state's veterans.

At POH, we learn all about what veterans have gone through, how courageous they are, the sacrifices they have made for our country and the challenges that they face when they return home from service.

In November, we honored our local veterans for Veteran's Day by participating in an honor ceremony on the green. One student sang the National Anthem. Other

students read poetry. Three students laid wreaths on the veterans' monument.

Afterwards, we all met with the veterans who attended, saw their photos and memorabilia and interviewed them about their service. It was a really great day.

This spring, all of us – the students from Naugatuck, and the students from Region 14, Region 16, Wolcott, Winsted and Plymouth – will show our originally created documentaries at the Connecticut Student Film Festival. This is a highlight of the year. It is something that we have all worked very hard on throughout the year.

Participating in this interdistrict cooperative grant program has been amazing. We were told from the beginning that we would be working with a lot of kids from other schools. That's new for us, but we get it. We love going to the program days and we understand the importance of reducing racial, ethnic and economic isolation. The students in the program are very diverse, just like we are.

We, the students of Naugatuck High School, feel like we are the voice for all the students in Education Connection's interdistrict grant programs. Standing together, we ask that you withdraw the proposed change to Section 16 of Bill 942.

Thank you.