

**Opening Statement**  
by  
**Terry Jones**  
**Nominee for Member of the State Board of Education**

**Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee Hearing**  
**February 3, 2015**

Good morning (afternoon), Senator Duff, Representative Janowski, Senator Kane, Representative Buck-Taylor and members of the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee.

My name is Terry Jones, from Shelton, where my family and I operate Jones Family Farms and Jones Winery. I have served on the State Board of Education since March of 2011.

Serving on Connecticut State Board of Education is a transformative experience. My colleagues are wonderful dedicated public servants. Our credo is to leave our politics and egos at the door and focus our decisions on what we believe is best for the children of Connecticut.

Our overarching concern is working to reduce our state's achievement gap and provide all students an opportunity to acquire a quality education.

I have particularly enjoyed seeing improvements in student health/nutrition, seeing progress in our technical and agriscience high schools, and reinvigorating civics/history/social studies in all grades and every school.

Another joy is expanding pre-K opportunities for all children.

Our work continues. Many aspects of education reform, such as Common Core and teacher evaluation need to be nurtured and monitored for continuous improvement. I believe student testing is a work in progress that needs our collective and experiential wisdom to determine what is right for student and teacher success in this second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

After a recent Yale education travel experience in Peru and the Amazon, my belief in the importance of a global education for Connecticut students is amplified.

My lifetime of farming has taught me that while there are a few basic principles of ensuring the healthy growth and development of plants and trees, the biological inter-relations and nuances are complex. This process is analogous to public education. We are guided by basic principles, but acknowledge that each child is an individual. Tapping their unique interests and passion must be at the heart of our mission.

It is with a sense of humility and a spirit of hope for helping Connecticut schools to become the best that they can be, that I come before you to ask your approval for my continued service on the State Board of Education.