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**Testimony in Support of
S.B. No. 318, 'An Act Concerning Private School Transportation'**

Before the Education Committee

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As a parent of student at Saint Mary School in Newington, I support S.B. No. 318.

The most important thing to me is my child. As a parent, every decision I make is made with my daughter's best interest in mind. Determining where she would receive her education, particularly in its earliest stage (Pre-K) was my top priority last year. And after extensive research, and visits, and personal analysis, I confidently enrolled my daughter at Saint Mary's. Fast forward a year and half to the present, trusting Saint Mary's with my daughter's early education is perhaps the best decision I have made in my life.

I have somehow become extremely involved in the community of The Saint Mary School. This was never my intention, as I knew full well that I simply do not have time to devote to its needs, and it would not be fair to offer help I could not deliver on. However, this school and its teachers, the principles and practices they hold, the curriculum and community they cherish have affected my daughter's life and in turn my own life so positively, I have no choice but to protect its interests to no end.

This SB 318 bill will be passed, and incentivizing townships to co-ordinate transportation of its children will prove to be the missing piece in solving wide-spread enrollment issues and educational diversity the state has faced in recent years.

As active parents, and elected officials it is our obligation; a responsibility of the highest priority to provide our Connecticut children with unhindered access to a full spectrum of educational options. It should be our main interest then to support these institutions, by enabling them to fill their classrooms with a diverse assortment of bright minds, and beautiful faces. These schools need families to enroll. These children need these schools to grow into adults, that become our next generation of Connecticut families. The transportation piece of the equation needs to become a non-factor in the decision making process, to get schools like Saint Mary back into the conversation of viable options of where to send a child to school. If this bill is not passed, and

the towns are not incentivized to lend their transportation services, we have failed our Connecticut children as parents and leaders.

Sincerely,

Jordan Conover