

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

Before the Education Committee

March 2, 2016

As a teacher at Saint Mary School in Branford, CT I support S.B. No. 318.

Saint Mary School provides an alternative to the public schools in Branford, giving parents the opportunity to choose what type of education is best for their child. All children have individual needs, and it is imperative that they not only go to the school that can best meet their needs, but that they have the same opportunity as other children in having the bus transportation be provided for them, no matter what school they go to in town. The children from Branford who attend Saint Mary School have parents who pay the same taxes to the town of Branford as those children who attend Branford Public Schools so it is important that bus transportation be continued for all children in our town. This would not only help the children and parents of our school, but it would help the town of Branford by easing the burden of possibly adding more children to their public school system if our parents couldn't get transportation to our school provided to them from the town for their children.

It is also important that reimbursement be considered to towns who voluntarily provide inter-district transportation to elementary school students that live out of town, whether it be a public or private school. Access to Catholic Schools should be available to all children, especially in light of declining demographics in our state and recent school closures.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to support S.B. No. 318.

Sincerely,

Margaret M. Smith

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