

My name is Dawn McNary. I am a parent and I live in East Haddam, CT. I am providing testimony concerning House Bill No. 5551, an Act Concerning the Commissioner's Network of Schools. I respectfully request you to amend this bill to ensure that the parental right to make informed educational decisions is not in direct conflict with the 'punishments' or 'financial penalties' being laid out in the bill.

Parental right to make informed educational decisions for children is part of the school/parent teamwork that should not be breached, in the quest to bring accountability into classrooms and into districts. Such an example, but certainly not the only example, is the Parental Right to make the informed decision to not participate in the current testing model known widely as SBAC, or the 'NEW SAT'. As you are aware by now these testing models are not without controversy. There are arguments to support either side of the battle and while we are not here today to discuss the failings or perceived merits of the SBAC/New SAT testing system we are here to discuss failing schools, accountability and the rights of parents to make informed decisions.

HB No 5551, An Act Concerning the Commissioner's Network of Schools, in its current form leaves open the possibility that the partnership between schools and parents would be irrevocably broken. The Bill, as is, could be interpreted by administration and/or BOE's in the state, to be in direct conflict with the parents' right to make informed decisions. In the case of the Standardized Testing model this would put forth an undue financial burden upon a district that has parents making an informed decision to not participate in the testing model and/or put forth an undue amount of emotional stress as Administrators, at risk of losing precious sums of money tied to this testing, use strong arm tactics to persuade or coerce, *seemingly at the urging of the State Legislature*, parents to make a decision that is not in the best interest of the child, but rather the best 'financial' interest of the district.

Please consider revising House Bill No. 5551 to ensure that Parental Rights are not to be trampled in the otherwise laudable effort to create accountability in Connecticut School Districts.

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