

Written Testimony

Education Committee Public Hearing

February 24, 2016

Having only just recently heard of this bill, and unable to attend the public hearing,

I am submitting this written testimony in OPPOSITION to SB 175

"An Act Concerning Recommendations of the Department of Education."

Being left little time to lay out my points of view in my own words, please allow me to quote three relevant sources that best reflect my opposition.

"No Child Left Behind is over.

We have been given the chance to change standards, change assessments, decouple teacher evaluations from test scores, and all that has destroyed the joy of teaching and learning. It is our legislators' authority to seize upon their new freedom, not to have administration enshrine more bad policy for the students and schools of Connecticut."

-Student Data Privacy, CT Alliance for Privacy in Education, (CAPE)

https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A_www.facebook.com_CTStudentDataPrivacy_posts_477027072487312&d=CwlFaQ&c=rxuyg758I4Zd3CDHNny_Hw&r=eqvkffDJKXNeM9X57XZToCwgHVA-5NPOfj1dPvxnask&m=7s9E0kRjp-KtnXyYfzcNaAzDXDhdbGsea1Cwp_V1va8&s=1VltX6rEvNyo0_Ny2_N6X4EbRsdTUpeiLxo7mUdySCg&e=

"The solution to this problem should not result in denying parents their inalienable right to protect their children from what they might consider harmful which is what this bill does by punishing local school districts into pressuring parents to comply with state testing requirements that the education leaders refuse to change. It is simply a backhanded attempt to coerce and punish parents by attacking the local education institutions on which they rely and that they generally trust."... "Less than a year ago, Education Commissioner Dianna Wentzell testified in favor of a bill which provided flexibility for MBR (Minimum Budget Requirements). Now, if more than 5 percent of parents refuse to have their children take the state SBAC test, SB 175 would take away that flexibility and the control that local boards of education have over their budgets."

-John Bestor, retired CT public school Psychologist

https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A_ctviewpoints.org_2016_02_23_ct-2Dsenate-2Dbill-2D175-2Dstifles-2Dparents-2Drigh-2Dto-2Ddissent-2Don-2Dstandardized-2Dtesting_&d=CwlFaQ&c=rxuyg758I4Zd3CDHNny_Hw&r=eqvkffDJKXNeM9X57XZToCwgHVA-5NPOfj1dPvxnask&m=7s9E0kRjp-KtnXyYfzcNaAzDXDhdbGsea1Cwp_V1va8&s=WHLU7cckEdN1IFKh4ov82Qx2WALQHH-Y4Pzrnq8QxI8&e=

"Their newest proposal is hidden inside Section 4 of Senate Bill 175. The bill would allow the Malloy administration to repeal a form of local budget flexibility that was granted to certain cities and towns during last years' legislative session if that school district was unable to persuade 95% of parents to make their children take the Common Core aligned standardized testing that take place in grades 3-8 and 11."

-Jonathan Pelto

https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A_jonathanpelto.com_2016_02_23_malloys-2Dproposes-2Dplan-2Dto-2Dpunish-2Dyour-2Dneighbors-2Dif-2Dyou-2Dopt-2Dyour-2Dchild-2Dout-2Dof-2Dthe-2Dcommon-2Dcore-2Dsbac-2Dtesting-2Dfiasco_&d=CwlFaQ&c=rxuyg758I4Zd3CDHNny_Hw&r=eqvkffDJKXNeM9X57XZToCwgHVA-5NPOfj1dPvxnask&m=7s9E0kRjp-KtnXyYfzcNaAzDXDhdbGsea1Cwp_V1va8&s=NJFKya8A70KOafS68kwbSlyFXiPUvJPd44WT7m2KPU&e=

If what has been said is true, I cannot support any legislation that attempts to BULLY and COERCE parents into forfeiting their inalienable right to say "NO THANK YOU" to a test that is widely seen as harmful to their child and punishes their teachers, their district and (by rating districts, which in turn, affects real estate values) their entire community of tax payers.

You cannot infringe on the rights of one population to protect the rights of another. Surely the state can find another way to ensure our neediest students get the funding they need without creating a hostile learning environment by pinning families and school administration against one another for the sake of gathering data. The test-and-punish cycle must STOP!

Respectfully submitted,

Kirsten Creighton, Thompson, CT