



TESTIMONY OF THE
CONNECTICUT PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)
BEFORE THE LEGISLATURE'S EDUCATION COMMITTEE
MONDAY, MARCH 7, 2016

RE: SB376 AN ACT CONCERNING STATE FUNDING FOR EDUCATION

SB378 AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS TASK FORCE

SB380 AN ACT CONCERNING THE EXCLUSION OF STUDENT
PERFORMANCE RESULTS ON THE MASTERY EXAMINATION FROM
TEACHER EVALUATION

SB381 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY SCHOOL
CLIMATE

HB5553 AN ACT CONCERNING ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY
EDUCATION ISSUES

My name is Kathleen Kennedy and I am the President of CT PTA. As the largest and oldest volunteer child advocacy association in the state, with over 40,000 members, Connecticut Parent Teacher Association (CT PTA) provides parents and families with a powerful voice to speak on behalf of every child. We wish to testify on the following bills.

SB376 AN ACT CONCERNING STATE FUNDING FOR EDUCATION

The current system of funding education is not achieving the goal of providing equal educational opportunity for all of children which is one of the cornerstone principles of our association. We are also concerned about the unpredictability of special education funding. CT PTA stands ready to assist in solving this important issue.

**SB378 AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE HIGH
SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS TASK FORCE**

CT PTA served on the Ad Hoc Committee on Secondary School Improvement. We support the changes being made in this legislation. We would also like to see

Computer Science specified as one of the possible credits for science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Data suggests that as many 122,000 new jobs every year for the next 10 years will require a college degree in computer science and we need to prepare our students for that future. As the High School Graduation Requirements Council is created we would hope that CT PTA could be added to the task force.

SB380 AN ACT CONCERNING THE EXCLUSION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE RESULTS ON THE MASTERY EXAMINATION FROM TEACHER EVALUATION

We speak in opposition to this bill. We believe that fair, effective and meaningful teacher evaluation systems enhance student learning and academic success. Such systems should use multiple measures of performance. Student achievement, coupled with student growth, should be one of the important factors in that evaluation. We believe this bill is premature. Connecticut currently has a collaborative group working on teacher evaluation –the Performance Evaluation Advisory Committee (PEAC) and they should be allowed to continue that collaborative process.

SB381 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY SCHOOL CLIMATE

All students should feel physically and emotionally safe at school. A respectful and positive school climate encourages positive behavior and supports student success. CT PTA supports this bill and would like to be considered for a seat on this task force.

HB5553 AN ACT CONCERNING ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ISSUES

As with SB 376, CT PTA believes that parents' input is valuable and would like to be considered as a resource to provide the parent perspective to this process.

About Connecticut PTA

Connecticut PTA comprises over 40,000 members consisting of families, students, teachers, administrators, and business and community leaders devoted to the educational success of children and the promotion of parent involvement in schools and well-being of children. PTA is a registered 501(c) (3) nonprofit association that prides itself on being a powerful voice for all children, a relevant resource for families and communities, and a strong advocate for public education, children's health and child

welfare. Membership in PTA is open to anyone who wants to be involved and make a difference for the education, health and welfare of children and youth.

540 Washington Avenue
North Haven, CT 06473

Website: www.ctpta.org
Email: office@ctpta.org