



March 7, 2016

Testimony on proposed bill 378: AN ACT CONCERNING THE
RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE HIGH SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS TASK FORCE

Submitted by: David Downes, Legislative Consultant for the Connecticut Association for Adult and Continuing Education, *a statewide professional organization representing providers of mandated adult education.*

Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann and members of the Education Committee:

Our professional organization has been following the work of the task force on high school requirements because we represent programs that serve more than 3,700 students at, or over the age of seventeen who are enrolled in district adult education credit diploma programs. These programs graduate about 1,300 students per year, following the credit completion provisions for regular education high school students.

CAACE is pleased that the task force has recommended alterations to the state graduation requirements that allow for personalization of learning and mastery-based approaches to the assessment of competency. Adult educators strive to engage learners who haven't been completely successful in their education by making their instruction relevant for each student and by providing a context so that academic subject matter is retained and appropriately applied to real life situations. The renewed attention to demonstrated mastery of 21st century skills in the task force's recommendations helps to assure that we produce students who are productive citizens and not just good test takers. The call of task force for broadening the options for courses in specific subject areas will allow for a tighter alignment between what students study and what they ultimately pursue in a career pathway of postsecondary education and/or occupational training.

Section 2 of this bill establishes a High School Graduation Requirements Council to carry out the other proposals in the bill, and CAACE would very much like the adult education perspective to be heard on this Council. Discussions about the K-12 education system sometimes overlook the unique tasks of adult education within that system. Adult education teachers regularly interact with both higher education programs and the world of work, assuring that the perspectives of those key partners of education are represented as well in decisions regarding how best to prepare students for their futures.

Thank you for your consideration of our perspective.