

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



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HOUSE MAJORITY LEADER

Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann, Members of the Education Committee. I am Representative Joe Aresimowicz of the 30th District serving Berlin and Southington. I offer this testimony on SB 380: AN ACT CONCERNING THE EXCLUSION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE RESULTS ON THE MASTERY EXAMINATION FROM TEACHER EVALUATIONS.

I want to thank this committee for holding this public hearing and facilitating a discussion around teacher evaluations. I have heard from teachers, school administrators, and parents on this issue and it is certainly an area of passionate debate. I applaud the work you have done, and are doing, to hear different ideas and propose legislation that will help to make sure all students receive a quality education.

Before the session started, I, along with the Southington delegation, had the opportunity to meet with the Southington Board of Education members, the superintendent, parents, and students for an honest discussion about how the state legislature could better support the work they are doing collaboratively to improve educational outcomes. During this discussion, the use of student performance results on standardized tests as a component of teacher evaluations came up.

One complaint I have heard is that the annual evaluations of every teacher put a burden on the local districts. Superintendents and school administrators are able to distinguish which teachers are performing well consistently year after year from those that are struggling. However, given the way our current statutes are written, school administrators must go through the same vigorous evaluation process with the high-performing teacher that they do for the struggling teacher. This seems unnecessary.

While this committee is doing its important work of looking at this issue, I suggest that you consider giving districts more flexibility in evaluating teachers that have consistently performed well in annual reviews. This will allow administrators to focus more time and attention on those teachers that are struggling in order to help them succeed.

Thank you for your consideration of this issue.