



Testimony of  
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***SB 383 An Act Concerning the Technical High School System***

Education Committee Hearing  
March 7, 2016

Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the committee: My name is Francesca Ford, and I have taught English at Emmet O'Brien Technical High School for the past twelve years. Last month I testified before the Appropriations Committee to express my concerns about the impact the Governor's proposed budget would have on the Connecticut Technical School System (CTHSS). I was most concerned that removing the CTHSS as its own line item and putting it in the Department of Education budget would reduce our Superintendent's ability to address the educational needs in our schools.

I am here today to speak in support of Senate Bill 383. Not only does this bill address the issues that would be created by the Governor's proposal, but it would help rectify the biggest problem we have faced this year -- our inability to fill vacancies. This year, over 40 teaching positions remain unfilled, which means that students sit in classes with uncertified substitutes day after day. Morally, we cannot refuse to provide our students with an education and claim it as a cost saving, yet that is exactly what we are doing. Our superintendent, Dr. Torres, is unable to post vacancies, or even hire people who have been interviewed and are the selected candidates. Senate Bill 383 streamlines the hiring process and allows us to put teachers in our shops and classrooms. Our students deserve no less.

The CTHSS has provided Connecticut a skilled, educated workforce for over a century. The money spent on our system is an investment in the state's economic future. When we try to create short-term savings by not hiring teachers, we are failing our students today and hurting our economy tomorrow. Senate Bill 383 is an important step in reclaiming the promise we have made to our students. I thank you for bringing this bill forward and enthusiastically recommend its adoption.

Thank you.