

Raised Bill No. 1009 AN ACT CONCERNING TRAINING FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION HEARING OFFICERS AND THE ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS REGARDING THE PROVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION.

Testimony From:

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Parent of a student with Disabilities

CT Certified Teacher

Former Member of the *State Advisory Council on Special Education* 2004-2012

Former Committee Member *CT's System of General Supervision and Focus Monitoring* 2004-2012

Dear Education Committee:

This is my written testimony. I will not be testifying at the hearing regarding this Bill. I like this bill and think it has great components. However, I cannot recommend that you pass it because I do not agree that each party can request an extension of timelines on settling a dispute. Time or loss of it is one of the cruelest cuts to students with Special Needs in the system. It is a common tactic for districts to delay services and providing them with the option to extend timelines without specific criteria defined is problematic. Extending timelines typically does not serve students well. It most often results in a delay of needed services. If you could stipulate this change to this bill and add under what criteria timelines could be extended especially in when it is the district delay the timeline then maybe I could be for it. It would depend on how the extensions of timelines are defined. Without it this will be abused.

I'm for Hearing Officers receiving further training especially regarding updates to changes in the law because it is constantly changing. I testified on Bill 403 regarding Hearing Officer Training I wish it was added to that bill training on updated laws under 403. I'm also for the State Advisory Council Study and definitely for determining a reasonable case load for Social Workers.

Sadly, I cannot recommend you pass this bill because of the undefined extension of hearing timelines. Please fix the time line issue and I would be happy to vote yes. Without defined criteria that makes sense for extending timelines my recommendation is NO do not pass this bill.

Thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely, Joanna Cooper