



Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, Inc.

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**Testimony
submitted to the
Education Committee
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**SB 8 AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS
CONCERNING EDUCATION.**

**SB 183 AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION.**

**HB 5167 AN ACT INCREASING THE AMOUNT A BOARD OF EDUCATION MAY DEPOSIT INTO
A NON-LAPSING ACCOUNT FOR UNEXPENDED EDUCATION FUNDS.**

**HB 5168 AN ACT CONCERNING THE CREATION OF THE SUMMER LEARNING GRANT
PROGRAM.**

**HB 5171, AN ACT PROHIBITING THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH FROM MAKING RESCISSIONS OR
OTHER REDUCTIONS TO THE EDUCATION COST SHARING GRANT DURING THE FISCAL
YEAR.**

CABE opposes the cuts in education funding in SB 8, An Act Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations Concerning Education. A reduction in education funding to many communities, and elimination of ECS funding in 31 communities, in fact means a reduction in programs and services that are available at the local level. We urge you to consider a funding system that includes all public school students and is based on their educational needs. They are now forced to consider elimination of all-day kindergarten programs, eliminating advanced level courses, increases in class size, curtailment of student athletics, and reduction in paraprofessionals. The continued reductions in funding to the State Department of Education also directly impact school districts, as there is a reduced capacity to provide support and technical assistance to districts. This forces districts to turn to private consultants with subject area expertise, at greater local cost, or to forgo the support needed to improve educational programs.

CABE supports the provisions of SB 183, An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Department of Education, which are largely technical in nature. In particular, we support section 4, which allows the use of an exclusionary time out under certain circumstances in order to deescalate a student's behavior. It is important that school staff have the ability to use this strategy rather than it being a prohibited physical restraint for the well-being of the individual student and others. We suggest the date by which boards establish policy on exclusionary time out be changed from July 1, 2018 to October 1, 2018.

CABE supports the provision in section 7, which extends the temporary permit for individuals certified by another state or territory to a three-year period. This provides an appropriate level of flexibility and supports efforts to attract certified educators, particularly in shortage areas.

CABE is concerned that the provisions in section 9 eliminates the responsibility of the Department of Education to make available to school districts the data systems needed to manage and document the teacher education and mentoring program and also eliminates their responsibility to provide professional development and training for mentors. We recognize that these proposals are a result of the elimination of funding for the TEAM program, but strongly urge the restoration of the funding rather than the elimination of these important responsibilities.

CABE strongly supports HB 5167, An Act Increasing the Amount a Board of Education May Deposit into a Non-Lapsing Account for Unexpended Education Funds. Increasing the amount that can be deposited to up to 2% of the total budgeted appropriation for education allows a board of education to be fiscally prudent in planning for future expenditures.

CABE strongly supports HB 5168, An Act Concerning the Creation of the Summer Learning Grant Program. There is abundant research that for our most academically challenged students there is a significant loss of learning during the summer months. Efforts to close the achievement gap will be strengthened if there are resources to provide summer learning programs that include educational, enrichment and recreational activities, as well as small group instruction in literacy and math.

CABE also supports HB 5171, An Act Prohibiting the Executive Branch from Making Rescissions or Other Reductions to the Education Cost Sharing Grant during the Fiscal Year. As we saw during the 2017-18 school year, mid-year reductions in the Education Cost Sharing Grant wreak havoc on local education budgets. Local school officials are always forced to make hard choices - but when faced with uncertainties in state funding, they are unable to prioritize and make the best educational decisions for the benefit of students.

Thank you for your attention to these issues.