Honorable Members of Education Committee:

My name is Rong Chen, a resident in Tolland since 2007. Please accept this as my written testimonial in support of bill No. SB359 “Prohibiting the Disaggregation of Student Data by Ethnic or Racial Subgroups in the Public School Information System”.

I unreservedly support the original concept of “prohibiting educational institutions or other state agencies from mandatory collection and separation of data from students by subpopulations of national origin or ethnicity”. I have two children, 6 and 10, born in this land of liberty and equality. When they grow up to study, work and live their American dreams, I hope they will always be judged by their ability and characters, not their ethnic background. President Reagan once said, “We must not allow the noble concept of equal opportunity to be distorted into federal guidelines or quotas which require race, ethnicity or sex, rather than ability and qualifications, to be the principle factor in hiring or education”, and I couldn’t agree more.

At the same time, I am also concerned in regard of this portion of the current bill language “unless … collected uniformly across the entire population of students”. As strongly as I believe collecting “demographic data” for specific ethnic or racial groups is both intrusive and divisive, I also believe the entire population shall not be subject to registry of ancestry immigration nation of origin or ethnicity origin. Collecting data by ethnic or racial subgroups goes against the America identity as a country of immigrants, wastes tax payers’ money and generates risks of being misused or abused for other purposes.

Please modify the bill language as to “No population of students shall be subject to data collection of ancestry nation of origin and ethnicity origin”. Please vote for bill SB359.

Thank you for your time.

Rong Chen
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