

February 28, 2019

James & Laura Bagg
Manchester, CT, 06040

RE: Senate Bill (SB) 874 'An Act Concerning Education Initiatives & Services in CT'

Connecticut Committee on Education

Dear Committee Members,

While we applaud the spirit of SB-874 whereby, in the interest of fiscal responsibility, the legislature has proposed redistricting and consolidation of the Connecticut School services, we strongly oppose the subtle change included in the proposed statute that would redefine the protections afforded those who elect to instruct children outside of the public school system and is incongruent with overall economic objectives.

Per Section 17 & 18 of the SB-874, the proposed legislation would modify Section 10-184 and 10-1600 of the current Connecticut General Statutes to require families who have elected equivalent home instruction option would be required to register with the local school district office. Although seemingly insignificant, the additional administrative processes associated with such a change would be overly burdensome on the school district. Furthermore, the additional registration requirement borders on punitive for those families affected.

On February 20, Governor Ned Lamont crystalized this state's budget challenges in his biennial Budget Address at the State Capitol. He clearly stated that Connecticut is facing a \$3.7B dollar deficit over the next two years and current projections add to that negative balance by \$400-\$500M annually.

Implementing a new registration process appears to ignore the severity of our collective financial challenge. The additional costs to the Connecticut School Districts for implementing the new registration provision will not be insignificant and are likely to include items such as:

- Generation, Maintenance, Tracking and Management of both the form and data
- Burden on the districts to pursue potential registrants
- Additional regulations for collection and enforcement
- Processes for delinquency, dispute resolution, and adjudication

Based on the above, it is difficult to perceive a justification for the additional registration process. A more efficient suggestion would be to conduct a comparison between registered students and annual census data to determine the number of children in a particular district that are pursuing equivalent home instruction education options. This readily available information achieves the same goals while avoiding any additional bureaucracy.

Please consider the fiscal future of our great state as you ponder the value of SB-874.

Thank you,
James and Laura Bagg