

Members of the Education Committee,

My name is Carolyn Bennett and I strongly oppose SB 874, and specifically Section 17 and Section 18 of this bill. Section 17 would amend section 10-184 of the general statutes to require homeschooling parents to "personally appear annually at the school district office and sign a registration form indicating that such child will be receiving home instruction." This is completely unnecessary.

I am a homeschool graduate. My parents began homeschooling in the 1980s, and they jumped through so many unnecessary hoops to homeschool. Both my parents and the people of the Meriden Public School system they dealt with considered it a waste of their time. In 1990 the homeschool community and the Department of Education worked together to develop optional guidelines, which relieved much unneeded pressure on homeschooling families. These guidelines explicitly recognize the constitutional right of parents to direct the education of their children through home education. Children belong to their parents, and it is the responsibility of parents to educate their children. If the parents wish to send their children to public school, that's their choice. If they wish to send their children to private school, that's their choice. And if they wish to homeschool their children, that is also their choice. As far as I know, parents who send their kids to private school don't have to register with the public school. Neither should homeschoolers.

Section 18 of this bill would amend Section 10-1600 to make homeschooling families eligible to receive "model curricula and frameworks" approved by the Department of Education for reading and mathematics in grades K-4. This is also unnecessary. Homeschooling families currently have an enormous variety of curricula available to choose from. They do not need curriculum from the state. If they want that, they can send their children to public school.

I consider both Section 17 and Section 18 to be completely unnecessary, and I ask you to please reject them both. Thank you.