

Dear Members of the Education Committee,

My name is Rachael Bertels and I homeschool two of my children: Samuel who is 11 and Roselyn who is 8. I have homeschooled my children since they were in preschool and have enjoyed the privilege to homeschool them and the freedom that our great state has afforded me. I humbly ask you vote no to SB 874, and that no restrictions be put on homeschooling. I believe firmly that once homeschooling becomes regulated even in the smallest manner, it will become a slippery slope. I do not wish to see this state so regulated with homeschooling that it becomes the carbon copy of what is being done in public schools. I do not agree with the ridged, test driven performance basis for education. We do test our children to measure their knowledge and retention of that knowledge but it is not the motive for learning. A love of discovery drives our classroom. We also do not strictly adhere to grade levels and they serve as loose guidelines and my children's individuality is better served from subject to subject. We have a 3rd grade student and a 6th grade student that sometimes uses grade level materials beyond their "level" and they have even used college level materials at times! If the schools became our overlords, we would lose this freedom of learning and thus a measure of joy we get from it.

I understand the desire to see children protected in this state. I feel the answer is not to overburden teachers and public school administrators with checking on every homeschool student in the state but rather perhaps legislate that kids in Connecticut are brought to the doctor each year for a physical exam which should be part of their routine health anyway.

Thank you for hearing this testimony of opposition to SB 874. Thank you for all the hard work you do for our state.

Sincerely,

Rachael Bertels