

SB 874- Angela Capinera

Dear Honorable Members of the Connecticut Education Committee,

I am writing to you with regards to the proposed language addition to Section 17 and Section 18 of SB 874.

I am respectfully requesting that this proposed language addition not be added.

I know you are going to hear many voices today for and against this. As someone who works in both the education and medical fields, I am strongly against this very Orwellian language and doublespeak and very outright discriminatory practice.

This language requesting that homeschoolers, and only homeschoolers, are mandated to go and "register" with their local school board smacks of economic and social strata discrimination. Why only homeschoolers? What happened to those who attend private school and boarding schools within the State of Connecticut? If parents and guardians of one group are forced to go and "register", then all parents and guardians, no matter where their child or children attend school, should register. What about the children who attend religious based schools or private academies outside of their municipality of residence? Shouldn't they be registered with their own municipality, or maybe both, so both municipalities can receive money from the State for this child or children who, even though a resident, does not attend the local public school district so the local district or districts can benefit off of the child or children that do not attend their schools?

I can tell you from personal experience on many fronts that parents who send their children to private schools and who homeschool still pay the same taxes and still share the same responsibilities of parenting and providing for the well-being of their children as any family in the public school system. Yet, they share and shoulder an additional burden of providing services on their own, yes, on their own, of finding sports leagues and non-public school provided activities because they are discriminated against because their children do not attend the public schools. I have only heard of one district in the entire state of Connecticut that allows private school students and homeschoolers to participate in public school activities. This is clear, outright, discrimination. If we all pay taxes and a parent can provide verification that they reside full-time in a municipality, all children under the age of 18 should be allowed to participate in public school provided services and activities.

In summation, please do not pull an Orwell on one group of people. If one group must register, then all children should be registered and then the local school district can receive funding for all children, whether or not they attend the local schools. Isn't this fair to everyone? Isn't this what Connecticut education law talks about, a fair and accessible education? That way, the school district is still getting money for all the children in private schools and who homeschool and it doesn't matter who is doing what? Also then, the districts can allow the parents who don't send their children to the schools to have a say about school policies as well, correct? Additionally, the school district can also have a much larger database of people's personal information to sell and hire more levels of bureaucracy. Is this the intent? Or is the intent to do what is

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"best" for the child or children based on the words, assumptions, misguided beliefs, and mistakes of a handful of bureaucrats and not the people who are out there everyday in the trenches trying to help, teach, and educate people?

I spend my days trying to help people who need help and want to succeed, who want a better life for themselves and their family. I have worked with students in public, private, and homeschools. It doesn't matter where a child gets an education from, it depends on the people taking care of that child. Think about Abraham Lincoln and Fredrick Douglass. I mention them here for a reason. There are good and bad seeds in all walks of life, you hearing and reading this know that from life learning and experience. You also know being part of one group does not automatically make you a good or bad person. This discriminatory language is saying all homeschoolers are bad and therefore must be controlled where any quick scan of the headlines will tell you about the abusers who walk the hallways of your local private school or public school district. No background check system is going to catch everyone and there are also those who know the right person or simply slip through or haven't been caught yet. Please keep this in mind.

Again, I am respectfully requesting Sections 17 and 18 not be added to SB 874.

Thank you for taking your time to read this.

Angela Capinera  
Stratford, CT