

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Rebecca. My family lives in Montville. My husband serves in the US Navy and I am a home educator to our 7 year old son. I'm writing to you today because I am vehemently opposed to Sections 17 and 18 of SB 874.

Homeschooling is the right choice for my family for many reasons, but today I will highlight the two reasons that are directly related to SB 874.

Homeschooling means my son gets one-on-one instruction time, which allows us to go at his pace so that he can thrive in both the subjects that naturally come easily to him, and those that he has to work harder at. It means I can carefully choose curriculum that works best for the way that he learns, teach him where he is at, and adjust as needed. It means we can take the time to explore and pursue his interests that may not be included in a public school curriculum. It means an individualized education that is sparking a love of reading and learning in him that will stay with him throughout his life.

Finally, homeschooling allows us to protect our son. As a very active and sensitive black boy in a mostly white school district, I do not trust that the school system has his best interests at heart, especially when those interests conflict with their own. I hear from parents of other children of color in my town about how their child was racially targeted, or was the victim of abuse by other students or staff. I hear about how it was swept under the rug by administration. I hear denials from white parents, how that's not the whole story, or the child was "aggressive", or how they have never seen an instance of discrimination from their perspective. And I know that is not the kind of education my son deserves.

I do not homeschool so that I can abuse my child in secret. I do not homeschool so that I can hide him from society. That is not homeschooling, that is abuse, and is under the purview of DCF, not the local school system. As an adoptive parent and former foster parent, I have invited social workers into my home dozens of times. My opposition does not come from a place of fear of DCF. I am familiar with too many horrifying stories of abuse and I share your concern for neglected and abused children. But homeschooling is neither abuse, nor is it a risk factor for abuse.

Section 17 of SB 874, requiring me to show up in person to register to homeschool each year does nothing to further my son's education, or protect him in any way. Section 18 would provide us curriculum that we do not need and do not want to use. The only thing these sections do is put us under the thumb of the same public school system we are actively choosing not to participate in.

I hope by sharing some of our story with you, I am able to show you why Sections 17 and 18 of SB 874 are unfair and unnecessary. I hope you choose to strike them from the bill.

Best Regards,
Rebecca Champion
Montville, CT