

Dear Members of the Education Committee:

We are writing to oppose SB874, specifically sections 17 and 18, which refer to regulating homeschooling. As a homeschooling family, we enjoy our right to educate our children in the manner that we deem appropriate for their needs and abilities. Requiring in-person registration and advocating specific curricula reduces our freedom.

We see several problems with these sections. First, requiring yearly in-person registration is onerous, both for homeschooling families and the districts, which will have added responsibilities and incur additional costs to implement and enforce this policy. How would districts even begin to identify homeschooling families who haven't been previously registered with their districts without invading citizens' privacy and what would enforcement of this policy entail? Who will pay for all the additional staff needed for this? Second, signaling out one particular group of people to require registration with a government agency is discriminatory. There is no call for such registration of families attending private schools in lieu of public schools. What purpose does this homeschoolers only registration serve? Third, part of the reason we have chosen to homeschool our children is because of the limitations of public school curricula. We review the grade level curriculum standards which are already posted to our district's website each year. We work to ensure that our children are exceeding these basic requirements. As college professors, we have seen first-hand the limitations of public school curricula and the limited instructional styles employed in public school classrooms, and we want more for our children. More and more each year, we see students entering college who are unable to think critically and creatively; students who demand that we give them answers that they can then regurgitate back to us rather than students who are willing to analyze, think critically and creatively, and develop new ideas. Students are so ingrained in a competitive testing culture that they are afraid to think for themselves or come up with creative solutions to problems. We hope to instead raise our children to love learning for learning's sake, to be thoughtful and critical thinkers, and to be creative. We do not want to be prescribed a curriculum that we have already assessed does not work for our family.

For these reasons and more, we respectfully request that you vote against SB 874 and allow homeschoolers to continue to enjoy our right to educate our children unimpeded.

Sincerely,

Marie and Brian Cordell

Fairfield, CT