

To the members of the Education Committee.

My name is Wendy Del Monte and I have lived in New Milford, CT for 10 years. I am writing to let you know that I oppose S.B. 874, An Act Concerning Initiatives and Services in CT. In particular, section 17, requiring homeschooling parents to register annually, and section 18, providing framework curriculum for homeschooled K through 4th grades.

The law currently reads that ALL parents have the responsibility of educating their children and that has long been the case. There is no need to change the existing law which is ultimately yet another unfunded mandate to local schools as well.

I have homeschooled my 2 children for the past 5 ½ years, allowing them each to learn in the way that suits them best, individually. One graduated 3 years ago and runs her own successful business, and the other will be graduating soon. I think it is a gross infringement of my constitutional rights as a parent to require me to register my children as proof that I am schooling them. It is of particular worry to me that this "homeschool registration lists" are to be shared with the DCF. It is my understanding that DCF does not receive information about other types of education parents. (Public or private school) unless they have a court order. It reeks of discrimination to me.

There is also no reason for the state to spend taxpayer money, creating curriculum for K through 4th grade, when there are myriad options available for low-cost or free, at local libraries or online, nor to spend money or resources on creating and maintaining a "homeschool registration list". Connecticut school are struggling to reach their budget goals and adding another burden to it is unnecessary and imprudent.

One of the main reasons we decided to homeschool our children was due to a suicide attempt of our oldest child due to horrific bullying that occurred in the school system. The lack of support for the bullied child even with multiple "Zero Bullying Tolerance Policies" with the staunch support for the rights of the bully were enough to have us research the homeschooling laws of Connecticut, The fact that parents are free to education their children in the was best suited to them with limited government interference was a very important to us, and helped us decide to stay in the state and homeschool our children.

This bill, and these sections in particular, will only hinder the quality of education in Connecticut, and waste time and resources better spent elsewhere, if at all.

Respectfully,

Wendy Del Monte

New Milford, CT