

February 28, 2019

Education Committee

Dear Members of the Committee,

PLEASE OPPOSE BILL SB 874.

I want to address Sect. 17. Section 10-194 and Sect. 18. Section 10-1600 specifically. I am a homeschool parent. I don't know how much you are familiar with homeschooling. Most people only know what they have heard about it through other people.

Currently, CT state law states that parents are to instruct their children, unless they choose to have someone else instruct them such as public school or private school. This gives me the right, parental right, to decide if I am going to instruct my children, or have someone else instruct them. In Sect. 17, the wording being added to CT law: "The parent or person having control of a child who provides home instruction to such child shall personally appear annually at the school district office and sign a registration form indicating that such child will be receiving home instruction" may seem like a simple way for homeschoolers to check in. But let me ask you a few questions and show you how what appears to be something simple and innocent, can turn into something intrusive and unnecessary. When you change the law and mandate homeschoolers to register with a public school, you now are giving the public school the authority to have the final say. Let me also ask, why would homeschool parents need to "personally appear" to register? This allows the school to intimidate the parents. Oh yes, it happens already even though they do not have the authority to tell us what to teach, how to teach, etc.

The wording in Sect. 17 also states that homeschool parents would need to sign a "registration form". What would we be registering for? Does this mean that the public school would be able to approve or deny if we can homeschool or not? Again, taking the parents' rights away to make that decision themselves. They do not have the right to grant us permission of how to instruct our children.

Let me ask you another question. At a time when our state has no money, why should we burden our school system with more tasks? It will require more money and more resources. There is no need to do this!

Sect. 18. Section 10-1600 states that "the Department of Education shall approve and make available model curricula and framework..., inclusive, for use by... parents who are registered to provide homeschool instruction."

We homeschoolers have thousands of curricula available to us. Why would the Department of Education need to make it available to us? It is available already. Why would they need to "approve" model curricula? Homeschoolers have higher scores on average than public school students. Why would we want less for our children?

These proposed laws are implying that homeschoolers need help finding curricula, and are not covering the necessary education material needed and that the public school needs to help us.

We homeschool parents want what is best for our children. It is not government oversight, nor government curricula. It is individual from family to family, child to child, what is best. That is why homeschooling works!

As a homeschool group leader, I have seen many situations between homeschoolers and the school systems. I have never seen any problems between homeschoolers and private schools. I have seen several issues with the public schools. I have also seen many people pull their children out of the public school to help their children thrive (for many different reasons). The homeschoolers I have seen, have always thrived. Parents know what is best for their children. Please keep the public schools out of our homes and vote NO to SB 874.

Sincerely,

Mary Del Re  
Homeschool Group Leader  
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