

Re: Opposition to SB 874, Section 17 and 18

To: Chairmen McCrory and Sanchez
Ranking Members Berthel and McCarty
Esteemed members of the Education Committee

Parents are responsible for their children, not the government!

Vote NO to SB 874, section 17 and 18

CT general statute section 10-184 validates the parent's right and responsibility, not the government's, for their children's education.

Section 10-184 states, "All parents and those who have the care of children shall bring them up in some lawful and honest employment and instruct them or cause them to be instructed [giving the OPTION of sending your children to Public School] in reading, writing, spelling, English grammar, geography, arithmetic and United States history and in citizenship, including a study of the town, state and federal governments."

Registration and model curricula are the beginning steps of the slippery slope to requiring conformance with government controlled public schools. Statute 10-184 offers public school as an option, not a requirement. Therefore, there is no need, no reason, no rationale, nor justification to require registration of homeschoolers, nor for Home Educators to be aware (and imminently required to follow) "model" curricula published by the State of Connecticut. Parents are responsible for their children, not the government! ***The United States was fundamentally founded on the principal of freedom for all, not control of all!***

Singling out and requiring home educators to "register" evokes the stench of past government regimes that required certain religious or ethnic citizens to register with that regime's government. *And I ask you, what happened to these people?!* Why is the State of Connecticut requiring homeschoolers to register? Do State Officials suspect *truly* Home Educated students (not just "on paper") are being hidden and abused?! ... ***In fact, home educated children are in the public eye often more than other students*** ... attending co-ops, play dates, running errands, field trips, and going to the library, among an abundance of other activities *outside* the home.

How many truly substantiated cases are there where it was definitely determined that a *truly* Home Educated child was being harmed?! I exhort you to compare this to the *substantiated number of public schooled children that are harmed everyday by family members and go unnoticed and unprotected by a failing DCF system.* ***In fact this very bill's purpose of registration is to play middle man for innocent***

homeschoolers to be registered with DCF. This pleads me to ask, “And for what reason”?! Does this sound familiar to a past government’s regime?

What about school bullies who are harming students and in turn provoking self-harm by the child who is bullied (cutting, substance abuse, and suicide) ... consider the fact that only second to unintentional injury, suicide is the leading cause of death among children aged 10-18! (per NIMH). Bullying by peers in public schools is often a precipitous reason for these tragic suicides. Furthermore, bullying is frequently a reason parents chose to homeschool their children. How many of us could have benefited by escaping the harms of bullying if Home Education was as easily available as it is today, with the abundance of curricula options, homeschool co-ops, and support?!

*Now I ask you, are Home Educators harming our children, or in fact **just like parents in public and private schools, actually looking out for the best interest of our precious children?!***

Second, I oppose section 18’s proposal for “model curricula”, which would open the floodgate to *required curricula*, as regulatory creep begins to **invade our God given rights and responsibility provided for in the U.S. Constitution to raise and train our children** as we deem fit ... not the state, nor the U.S. Government!

Home Educators vary in reasons for choosing to educate their children instead of electing the *option* to send them to public schools. For some, it is because their children need more one-on-one attention and they get lost, distracted and overwhelmed in a class of 20-30 kids. For others, it is because of rightful concern that their children will be bullied, or, even needing to remove their children because they are currently being subjected to the abusive attacks by bullies ... in the very schools that assert they are protecting our children. For others, it is the freedom Home Education offers to individualize their children’s education, going at slower or faster paces, reviewing subjects and topics that are more difficult, spending more or less time as needed, adapting education style to the child’s learning style, and feeding thirsty minds by exploring intriguing subjects! This is not possible in a classroom of 30, 20 or even 10 children! **So I ask you, how does enforcing model curricula on these children serve their best interests advancing their education and knowledge?**

The whole premise of Home Education is not that we would follow the very curriculum already offered in public schools (i.e., “model curricula”), rather that we as Home Educators have the freedom to teach our children (while remaining within the core subjects prescribed by the current Connecticut law, general statutes section 10-184) in the methods and with the resources that fit our child’s needs best. So why would Home Educators want to follow “model” public school curricula, when it is from the very system that has failed our children? **Submitting to a public school system is fundamentally in violation of our Constitutional rights and inherent freedoms as Americans and U.S. Citizens.**

The beauty of homeschooling is the freedom of choice in curriculum. That freedom is preserved by maintaining independence from public schools. **This independence is afforded to other “non-public”, non-government controlled educational institutions, such as private schools and colleges.** Yet this bill is asking Home Educators to follow the State of Connecticut’s Governmental public school institution. **Home Educators are private citizens, and just like private schools, they are not members of the state government, state funded, and state controlled school system. As private citizen’s why are we being asked (and imminently required) to be subjected to and follow the State of Connecticut’s prescribed curricula?!**

Libertas Omnium

Our Kids, Our Rights ~ Freedom for All

Thank you for hearing my testimony on SB 874, Section 17 and 18.

Respectfully signed,
Joy Dionne of Derby, CT

Senate District 17 and House District 114