

RE: SB 874 AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATION INITIATIVES AND SERVICES IN CONNECTICUT.

To Whom It May Concern,

I adamantly OPPOSE the two suggested amendments to the following sections of SB-874, and request that you vote to oppose them as well:

Sec. 17. Section 10-184 sect 18. Sect 10-1600

It is inappropriate for the state to force themselves in the rights of parents'/guardians' to choose how to educate our children. The right to educate our children at home has been a protected right in CT for generations, and should be maintained as such.

As written, I feel these sections demonstrate a significant step towards allowing government overreach. There has been no demonstrated reason to change the existing laws in regards to homeschooling freedoms. Mandating that parents register their children as homeschoolers is a form of discrimination, profiling, and eerily is reminiscent of the events leading up to the Holocaust. As written, there is no protection against unnecessary information sharing from the school registry with other state agencies. In fact, recent email exchanges from those involved suggest it is the states intention to cross check homeschooling families with dcf. what will stop th becomes a very slippery slope towards the erosion of individual rights and in the extreme, has the potential to carryover to elimination of personal freedoms and medical choice.

There has been no demonstrated history of problems within the homeschooling Community. In fact, the existing research suggests that children are substantially at lower risk for abuse as homeschoolers, than children within the public school systems.

In addition, requiring parents to interact with school systems that in many cases have failed their children can be seen as an act of intimidation. As written, there is no policy or suggested procedure in place for the registration suggested. Leaving that open ended or vague could result in a simple signing your child's name to a piece of paper or more complicated interview process..... that's the part that's frightening to me. Many homeschoolers have left school systems on unfriendly terms due to fighting over services to be provided to special needs children, protecting religious freedom within the school, or lack of schools ability to protect against bullying. Often, parents have spent years fighting for services with medical appointments, failed iep follow through, and assistance of legal advocates. .Requiring that they return to that school to report their status implies an authoritative relationship of the school over the family, and as such, could be seen as coercive, intimidation, and discriminatory. Lack of town resources for the existing school systems is another reason to oppose these sections of the bill. Who will finance the registration process and monitor compliance? This will become another task to be funded by school district, taking their already limited resources away from educating and protecting children.

OPPOSE SB874

(Pages 21-22)

Sec. 17. Section 10-184 Lines 623 - 627

&

Sec. 18. Section 10-1600 Lines 652 - 657

Thank You for your time in hearing my views on this matter.

Rebecca Durfee  
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