

February 25,2019

To Whom It May Concern,

Recently, I have been made aware that on March 1, 2019, the Joint Committee on Education will consider Connecticut Senate Bill 874. Two of the proposed amendments within the bill will have a direct impact on our family and I wanted to write to you today to express our concern. Home education has provided our family with the ability to successfully choose enriching, interactive, hands-on curriculum and experiences for our children that have helped them grow into independent, passionate learners. Home education affords us the chance to be able to cater to our kids' individual learning styles and lets us select the things that meet each of our children's unique educational needs. SB-874 sets the stage for the erosion of the homeschooling freedoms that we currently enjoy in Connecticut.

Section 17 would amend section 10-184 to require homeschooling parents to: "personally appear annually at the school district office and sign a registration form indicating that such child will be receiving home instruction." We currently have a great working relationship with the Woodstock Public Schools and are thankful that they are doing such a great job providing an excellent educational environment to the students that attend there, but we strongly feel that it is first and foremost a parent's responsibility to ensure the education of their child(ren). While choosing to send your child to public school certainly satisfies that responsibility, having a public school district register a child for home education seems to be a bit backwards. Giving authority to a public school district over the registration of a student who is being educated at home infringes upon the implicit right of a parent to direct the education of their children.

Section 18 would amend Section 10-1600 to make homeschooling families eligible to receive "model curricula and frameworks" approved by the Department of Education for reading and mathematics in grades K-4. While this section does not yet require homeschoolers to adopt state-approved curriculum, this reference to homeschoolers within the section equating them with individual schools that have been identified as having academic achievement gaps certainly muddies the important distinction between state-approved schools and home education. Because choosing individualized educational materials, curricula and experiences has helped our children grow and develop into the young men they are today, we are staunchly opposed to the state mandating a framework for home education. While this bill does not require homeschoolers to conform, it certainly paves the way for more regulation to follow.

We are so thankful for the current homeschooling freedoms we enjoy in Connecticut. While we appreciate the successes students can have in the public education system, we also clearly see the amazing results of a quality home education in our children. The proposed changes to the current education law begin to erode our parental rights and undermine our ability to provide individualized educational opportunities for our children.

Sincerely,  
John & Kimberlyn Evers