

To whom it may concern, and members of the education committee,

My name is Kate Gaston. I am a resident of Branford. This testimony is in response to SB 874, sections 17 and 18. Specifically, regarding the mandatory registration of homeschoolers and suggested curriculum for K-4th grade students.

I am opposed to these sections of this bill as they are unnecessary. My support for this statement is based on two points. First, there is no evidence that home educated students are at higher risk of abuse than public or private schooled students. In fact, there is some data suggesting the opposite, that home educated students are at decreased risk of abuse. Secondly, there is no data to support the claim that more regulation of home educated students does anything to reduce the potential for abuse of home educated students. In addition to less incidence of abuse, home education has been shown to benefit students in everything from test scores, college readiness and performance, to creating better citizens. There is no need to impose further regulation upon a system that is functioning extremely well.

Please see the following quotation from a study published in 2018, from the National Home Education Research Institute:

"A statistical analysis of 18 years of data from all the U.S. states found no relationship between the degree of state control or regulation of homeschooling and the frequency of abuse of homeschool students. That is, low-regulation states experienced neither more nor less abuse of homeschool students than medium-regulation and high-regulation states; none of the regulation categories was significantly different from the other categories. The lack of a correlation undermines the claim that there is some causal relationship between state control of homeschooling and abuse of students. In this analysis, there was no significant correlation between regulation and homeschool abuse."

(The relationship between the Degree of State Regulation and Homeschooling and the Abuse of Homeschool Children (Students), March 15, 2018 by Brian D. Ray, Ph.D.)

Due to the unnecessary nature of SB 874 section 17 and 18, I request that you vote against these sections.

Thank you for your time and attention to these matters. I am available to answer any further questions you may have on the matter.

Sincerely,

Kate Gaston
Branford, CT