

## Testimony in Opposition of Sections 17 and 18 of S.B. 874

To the members of the Education Committee,

We are writing this testimony in opposition to Sections 17 and 18 of S.B. 874 regarding homeschooling. Section 17 of this bill calls for mandatory in-person registration for homeschool children with their public school district. We are both state certified teachers with multiple graduate degrees in education and a combined 23 years of public school teaching experience, but we CHOOSE to homeschool our three children. This is our choice for our family because we believe homeschooling gives our children a happier, healthier, and well- rounded educational experience. Mandating homeschool families to register in public school districts begins the process of eroding the rights of families to choose what is best for their child's education. No reason has been given as to why this is a necessary burden to place on the homeschool community. Furthermore, parents who homeschool do not wish to be connected to public school districts. Many families have removed their children from their local public school, as a result of negative experiences and do not wish further communication with their school district. Other parents have homeschooled from the start and do not wish or intend to build any type of relationship with their public school district. Public school districts should not spend their resources registering homeschool families, who have opted out of their educational environment. The State and public school districts should instead put their resources towards creating an educational setting that values all learners and develops the whole child into a contributing member of their community.

Additionally, Section 18 of S.B. 874 calls for the state to offer a model curriculum for homeschool students. This is completely unnecessary because the Connecticut Frameworks are already public information and can be easily accessed by parents without registering for a "model curriculum". Also, there are hundreds of curriculums available to homeschool families in a variety of mediums that meet and exceed any and all educational expectations in the state of Connecticut. Homeschool students consistently outperform public school students, which further makes this section of the bill ridiculous. The State Legislature should focus its energy on how to improve public school education, so that students in the state have a rigorous and equitable educational experience. Leave high achieving homeschool families alone to decide what is best for their children.

We urge you to remove all language regarding homeschooling in Sections 17 and 18 of S.B. 874. We do not see a reason to be registered or connected to the public schools. How we educate our children is our choice and it has nothing to do with the public school district. Please protect the freedom of Connecticut parents to choose what is best for our children.

Sincerely,

Aaron and Jaime Hoffman