

Education Committee Public Hearing
Re: SB - 874, Sections 17 & 18
March 1, 2019

Dear Members of the Education Committee,

I am writing to oppose Governor's Bill # 874, specifically Section 17 (pg. 20,21) making changes to Section 10-184, and Section 18 (pg 21,22). The measures proposed are, as I understand it, intended to prevent cases of homeschool neglect or abuse of the children thus schooled. This is clearly government overreach, and a sort of overreach that is profiling - suspecting every home school situation to be potentially neglectful and / or abusive. Having parents appear in order to register their children with the Department of Education is also discriminatory, as the same requirement is not made for those sending their children to private school, or putting them in the educational care of a tutor.

The Department of Children and Families already has the authority to check out suspected abuse and / or neglect where there is a legitimate report to that effect. This bill assumes every home school situation is suspect without the need of a report. It discriminates against the parent(s) and profiles them as suspect without any evidence.

Furthermore, children who attend public school suffer at the hands of teachers and other students who marginalize, discriminate and bully them, and this happens frequently and continually. It would help way more children if that were addressed. By comparison, very, very few instances of homeschool abuse turn up. These measures are a draconian solution to a problem that hardly exists, forcing every home school family to submit to examinations not required of others whose children are educated outside the public school system.

This kind of thinking would lead to a need to register the family members who oversee the elders in their care, for fear of elder abuse. It could require the registration of every spouse for fear of spousal abuse. We are not that kind of society. We have a Constitutional requirement that says innocent until proven guilty.

Please, do not let these measures in SB-874 come into power in our state.

Sincerely,

Peter Johnson



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