

To: Connecticut General Assembly, Education Committee
From: Amy R. Kirschbaum, West Hartford, CT
Re: SB-00874
Date: February 26, 2019

I am writing to oppose Sections 17 and 18 of SB-00874, which reference home instruction. There is no reason to require home educators in Connecticut to register with their local school districts. The State legislature should not begin to go down a burdensome regulatory path without stated reasons and open debate.

Home education has a long and vibrant history in this country. Many great Americans have been educated at home, but most of us have grown up with compulsory education laws, and we have lost touch with this history. Parents, not the State, are primarily responsible for raising and educating their children. Connecticut, to its credit, has long recognized the tradition of home education.

My children have been educated at home for more than ten years. Parents choose to homeschool for many different reasons, but we have this in common: we have our kids' best interests in mind. Homeschoolers take many different approaches in teaching their kids at home, depending on age, temperament, family dynamics, and finances. One of the beauties of home education is the flexibility it offers. It is not an easy endeavor, and it is not feasible for everybody. Many home educators have some kids in public or private school, and others at home. Many employ tutors and online classes. Many participate in educational cooperatives where parents share teaching and/or hire teachers. We do not choose this path lightly. It is a serious commitment of time, energy, and resources. Please do not begin imposing incremental regulatory burdens on us without good reason, adequate knowledge, and fair debate.

The freedom to home educate in Connecticut is an amazing example of individual liberty that should be cherished and preserved. I strongly urge you to remove any reference to home instruction from this bill, and to reject future attempts to begin curtailing the freedom to home educate in Connecticut.