

Testimony in opposition of SB 874

Please vote NO on Sections 17 and 18 of SB 874.

I do not believe that homeschoolers/home educators and their children should be required to register with the school system, state, or other. We home educators have successfully homeschooled our children for over 30 years in Connecticut without government oversight. Certain states, such as Connecticut, have little or no state government regulation of homeschooling. This bill will impose regulation over homeschoolers where there was no regulation before. Statistically, homeschooled children are safer, meaning there is less abuse and less fatalities, according to data from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Education.

Implementation of this legislation may have unintended detrimental consequences for homeschoolers. And it will likely cost towns and the state more money for oversight.

We left the school system, because it was not providing the best education for our children. I have two daughters that I have homeschooled for many years. One daughter is now 20 years old and currently attending Connecticut College. We withdrew her from the public school system after second grade. There were many problems occurring at the school and with her education with which she was unhappy, and consequently, as were we. Homeschooling allowed me to choose the best classes, teachers, curricula, environment, etc. for my daughters. It has also allowed us the freedom to change curricula or environments which were not beneficial. Through homeschooling high school, we utilized curricula at home, online classes, homeschool cooperatives, and community college. My daughter graduated with an A.A., summa cum laude, a year and a half after high school graduation.

My younger daughter, who never attended public school, is currently homeschooled. In addition to using curricula at home and online classes, we attend a homeschool cooperative that meets twice a week. The cooperative is run by homeschool parents and classes are taught by homeschool parents. Some are former teachers, former graphic designer, lawyer, former engineer (myself), former college professor, self-employed, and others; each one offers excellent classes in topics which they are interested and invested.

I have homeschooled for thirteen years in Connecticut. I have met and spoken with a huge number of homeschoolers, each diligently educating their children. There are many active groups, providing advice and support, for homeschoolers in CT. There are thousands of successful homeschooling stories like my family's, because these children were given the freedom to learn at their pace, in their style, in a supportive environment without government oversight.

Submitted by: Tonya Mankowski, Watertown