

As a parent of children that are homeschooled, I strongly oppose SB 874 and any other bill that opens the door to requiring any parent to register their children in order to allow them the education they deserve.

We moved here primarily due to the openness, the unnecessary regulation of homeschoolers. To maintain a "list" is reminiscent of other reasons to keep lists - mainly, to keep people in line and do what others think is best for you.

Why would we support having homeschoolers "register" with the very system that, even with voluntary filing of the NOI, has led to homeschoolers being wrongfully threatened, bullied, harassed and reported (falsely) to DCF.

I recently heard of a family that homeschools being informed by their representative that the mandatory annual registration would become information readily available and given to DCF. They were told that DCF would in turn use that list to "cross check" with their former public school students that have been withdrawn to be homeschooled. I do not believe that DCF needs to know whether or not I'm homeschooling, especially if my children have never set foot in a public school before.

This all is very alarming to me because several other states have laws that allow DCF to visit each homeschooling family at the start of each school year, all without probable cause! It seems that Connecticut is heading that way as well.

To allow this is a violation of parental rights.

If school districts are concerned with abuse their public school students are suffering, they already have an open case and have their work cut out for them. In fact, there are many families that attend public schools that SHOULD be investigated and are not. If the goal is to protect children, the public schools and DCF have much work to do within their own walls without stepping foot in families that want nothing to do with the public school system.

The Office of Child Advocate was shown to skew numbers, cherry-pick data, and then accuse homeschooling in the terrible case of Matthew Tirado. Instead of actually investigating DCF as it should have, OCA automatically scapegoated homeschooling.

Section 17 of SB 874 is a shielded attempt at making homeschoolers pay for a crime they did not commit.

The bill (section 17) has no mention of making private school students register, either. Are they not as "concerning" to the government? No, because they already compile 'lists'.

There is also already evidence that these series of bills are preventing people from coming to Connecticut and sadly, is driving the decisions of people to leave our state. I

hope you will oppose SB 874, and any other legislation that opens the door to forced registration of Connecticut homeschooling families.

Sincerely,
Christopher McCue