

To: Members of the Education Committee and Governor Lamont
From: Julie Murphy
Date: February 25, 2019
RE: SB-874 - AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATION INITIATIVES AND SERVICES IN CONNECTICUT

As a homeschooling parent, I am writing this testimony today to express my strong opposition to SB-874. There are two sections in particular that are very concerning to myself and countless other homeschooling families within the state of Connecticut. To further explain myself I will briefly discuss Section 17 and 18 of SB-874.

In Section 17, this bill threatens the family's decision to freely educate their child/children as they see fit. It is not the state's responsibility to force a parent or guardian to register their child/or children within a local school system or district. This completely undermines the parent's role and responsibility as doing what is best for their child. The government does not have the right to dictate how the education of a child should happen or where it should happen. This is against my constitutional rights and I refuse to sit back and allow this freedom to be taken from me and my family.

I am also very confused as to why it would benefit the government to have homeschoolers "register" with the very same system that even with a voluntary filing of the NOI (Notice of Intent) has led to homeschoolers being wrongfully threatened, bullied, harassed and reported (falsely) to the Department of Children and Families. This is clearly a misuse and abuse of their authority.

Section 18 directs the State Department of Education to establish model educational frameworks that homeschoolers could use. Not to sound arrogant, but I do not want to follow the model of public education in this state. This is exactly the reason I am homeschooling my children. Countless models and curriculums have left students not only failing, but failing to thrive.

Unfortunately, over the past few years, I have personally known numerous families who have pulled their children from the public-school system because of any one of the following reasons (just to name a few):

- special needs students not getting the help they need
- lack of structure and discipline within the classroom
- kids falling behind because they are bored and not being challenged
- bullying (and complete disregard or inadequate follow-up procedures by the school system)
- sexual assault
- inadequate curriculum (literally had an elementary teacher tell me they never had an actual science curriculum, she had to make up her own, she was excited to have just received one a few years ago)
- teaching for standardized testing
- one size does not fit all style of teaching

Homeschooling allows parents to teach their child/children at their individual level in a manner that allows them to thrive. No one is going to care more for my child than my husband and

myself. As a parent, I know the needs of my children because I am with him/her day in and day out. This allows me to personalize and customize the best education possible.

In conclusion, I staunchly oppose SB-874. I will not let my family's rights be taken away. I request, as a citizen of Connecticut that you not support this bill or any current or future amendments to this bill that would threaten the freedom of my constitutional or parental rights. In the future I will be supporting legislative candidates that support parent's rights and freedom of education.

Thank you for your time and concern,

Julie Murphy
Naugatuck, CT