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A letter and testimony in reference to SB-874 sections 17-18 and homeschool family registration.

Madam and Mr. Chairman and Members of the Education Committee,

I have already submitted a testimony as to why this family objects to this SB- 874 sections 17-18, so I will not bore you with all those details again. I am here now to discuss how we as a community have found out the WHY this is going on with the committee and the “Registration” of homeschoolers. We know that this is in fact a DCF collection of registration and we are aware that the schools are merely a Middle Man. We are NOT abusive nor are we neglectful parents. We are however outraged. We are to be denied due process, strictly based on how we opt to educate our children? We are to be “cross checked” by DCF when we have done NOTHING wrong?

I put to you, members of the Committee, how do we reconcile this registration and the federal oversight that DCF has been under for decades. I ask, how is it that we as homeschooling families are asked to register only? In fact the DCF system has been under federal oversight for decades, and the latest report from the person who leads this oversight has indicated that DCF still has failed on half the items. They have failed on providing services for families and children, out patient mental health, in home services, substance abuse, domestic violence, mentoring, housing vouchers, foster and adoption resources along with readily available placement and treatment options. Now our government wishes to have homeschooling families register with public school, that way DCF can have access to this to “cross check”? Let me remind you, Connecticut Supreme Court in the CT. Coalition for Justice in Education Funding v Rell case 327 conn 650, (2018) cited the court’s finding that there is a “clear evidence of failing public school, unequal treatment, and illiterate students being graduated” from these public schools. Why would we want to be part of these failing schools? It is my belief that you wish to have all homeschooling families to register with the DCF, and can not do so openly and have chosen to mask this in other sections and under other language, that is outrageous.

This registration is to enable the DCF to cross check families that have NO open case no file and no outstanding issues with the DCF. This registration allows the DCF to cross check families without their due process, what is the purpose of doing so? If DCF is looking into this with the public schools, DCF has an open case with this school and the family involved, then DCF already is aware of this case. At this point the DCF is to do their job, and registering homeschooling families does not enable this to be a task that will improve this department, as stated above with the on going federal oversight.

I am not just a homeschooling mom, I am also a Nurse of 20+ years in good standing, and that would make me a Mandated Reporter. I am not the only Mandated Reporter that I homeschool with, as I have many friends who are as well. See homeschooling families are all kinds of backgrounds and education. We are EMS, EMT, Paramedics, CNAs, PCAs, Doctors, Lawyers, Pastors, Police and Law Enforcement, Scout Leaders, and Teachers. Our kids in our group of over 120 families has just finished a SHAPE class with the Fairfield Police Department, INSIDE the Department’s building and we were their inaugural class, and can be seen all over the Department’s social media. How much more mandated reporter can anyone get? You see I have reported, I know what abuse is and what it looks

like when it is seen. Homeschoolers are not that, we are ones who take on the Mantel of our kids education and that is not done lightly. We know our rights as stated in Statute 10-184 and we are not going to allow this registration. We will object entirely to the way this is being done, and we are not the abusers and neglectful parents that you wish to portray us as, and take major umbrage at being defined as such as a community. That being said, there is plenty that we could use to state our case, lets look together.

- 1.) According to homeschoolingbackgrounder.com using stats from U.S Dept. of HHS and the U.S. Dept. of Ed the data states. 1.3% of kids educated outside the home are abused by their parents. Only, 0.00035% of kids who are homeschooled are abused by their parents, meaning that there is a 371 times LESS chance of a homeschooled child to be abused by parents and or peer group.
- 2.) There have been 181 school shooting in the U.S since 1990 resulting in over 200 deaths and injuries in public schools. Are there not rules and mandated reporters to spot a problem with abuse in a child that could later be a shooter? Like maybe in Park Land FLA? Was this boy not known to the state?
- 3.) Google Teacher Student Relationships, and this will show you 197 million hit. A simple google search here tonight I found local ones. So there is a case in Bridgeport a female teacher Laura Ramos is serving a 5 yr sentence for having sex with 2 students with special needs in 2016-`017? And we are to trust the schools? We also have a teacher in New Haven Kirvanna Jones served only 9 months for abusing a student who was 15 yrs old this teacher was on PAID adm leave, really? Ms. Jones was also texting inappropriate photos to this 15 y/o. This is just a simple google search found stories in CT Post and New Haven Register.

We haven't even started with the epidemic bullying and suicide of children who are now younger and younger in age killing themselves, and that bullying is reported to those who are meant to stop this from happening.

It is so sad to research, to see the failures. To be the ones who are focused on, when the state should be looking to it's own house. Homeschoolers, we are not the problem. We can look up and see at any time the abuses in public schools, foster homes, and with DCF just by doing a simple google search. Yet homeschoolers are portrayed as reclusive and abusive families? There are many cases of public schooled kids that are truant and not homeschooled, like Matthew Tirado who was known and let down by this states OCA and DCF he was never homeschooled, he was lost in a system that failed to save him.

Stats above were googled, found in the New Haven Register, CT Post and thefederalist.com, it took less than a half hour. So I am sure that the members of this committee if they should wish would be able to find the same information for themselves. There is no merit to the DCF, no due process registration of homeschooling families. It is simply overreach and searching for a community to blame.

In closing, I strongly object to this bill SB-874 and the Sections of 17-18 should be stricken from this bill, as they have no merit or cause to be included.

Sincerely,

Marianne Newell

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