

Dear lawmakers of Connecticut,

I am writing today in opposition of SB-874, particularly sections 17 and 18, although I find much of the bill disturbing as both a parent and a former educator. The majority of the home school community in Connecticut is made up of parents who want better for their children than public school can provide. In many cases, these parents would choose to send their children to private or religious schools but cannot afford to do so. These parents instead home school their children. Home schooling does not increase the rates of illiteracy or a general lack of education. Statistically, homeschooled children are more likely to be accepted to college, and often have a more advanced education than public school children. In addition, by not forcing homeschooled children to learn to pass standardized tests, which really only show the ability to regurgitate information, they are more prepared for college courses which require real study skills and the ability to research, reason, and express themselves in a professional manner. Parents should not be forced to show their children's progress, as that is the point of homeschooling: to allow a child to learn at his or her own pace, and in the learning style which is best for them. Homeschool children are often better socialized than public school children as well. This is often because public school children are not allowed to socialize except for a brief lunch and recess period. The rest of the time, they are sitting at desks being lectured to, doing worksheets, or online practice, instead of experimenting and learning in a hands-on, real world style which is ultimately more applicable to their lives.

Requiring parents to register in person every year and be presented with their "educational options" is tantamount to coercion by the state. Considering the state wants to save money on public schooling by forcing regionalization, homeschooling should not be made harder to do. Homeschooling costs the state nothing. All expenses are taken on by the parents. Finally, the provision that is determined to decrease funding for special education is appalling. To state in the bill that educators must be trained in various forms of trauma-focused modalities, and then cut funding to help those students is oxymoronic. I sincerely hope all the state lawmakers in Connecticut listen to their constituents and focus on what is most important for the children, and not what is easier for the state.

Sincerely,

Shannon Nolan