

To: Clerk of the Education Committee
From: Rachael & Ian Novak, Torrington, CT
Date: February 26, 2019
RE: Opposition of SB 874

Dear Education Committee,

We oppose Sec. 17 and Sec. 18 of SB 874 because we do not feel that registering with the City of Torrington or any government entity would be beneficial in any way, and do not see any reason for it. We also do not agree with any direction from the government now, or in the future, in regards to how our family should homeschool our children, whether it be loose frameworks or more specific requirements. The public school system is stressed enough, and adding the additional responsibility of overseeing a population of homeschoolers that do not need or want the oversight is a waste of precious resources.

My husband and I chose to homeschool our children because we have heard and seen first-hand so many examples of how the Torrington School system needs help and is not able to support all of the children in the way that teachers and administration wish they could. I know a lot of teachers. There are a lot of public school teachers in my family (including my sister), and I go to the gym and work out with many teachers who have become my friends, some from the Torrington School system. All of the teachers my husband and I know tell us to keep our kids home and homeschool as long as we can not only because they don't like how the school systems have negatively changed over the past couple decades, but also because what we're doing with our kids at home is working and working very well. Additionally, we have heard so many stories of how the public school system has failed my friends' children, as well as the students of our teacher friends and family. The school system cannot provide for our children what we are able to at home. The attention and individually tailored learning instruction that we are able to give them is far superior at home. What our family is doing is working for our children. Everywhere we go, be it the gym, museum, library, grocery store, hospital, rails to trails, visiting with family, we are told over and over again how well behaved and smart our children are.

What we are doing in our homeschooling works very well. We strongly feel it is not only a privilege to teach our children how we choose, it is our right. Our family does not need oversight, nor do we need to be controlled or directed to do what is right and best for our family. Our state is in a fiscal crisis, and this bill would add unnecessary stress and cost to the public school system.

For these reasons and so many more, we oppose both sec. 17 & sec. 18 of SB 874.

Rachael & Ian Novak
Torrington, CT