

Testimony for Public Hearing  
Education Committee  
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Governor's Bill No.874 - An Act Concerning Education Initiatives and Services in Connecticut

Greetings Education Committee. My name is Jennifer Ouellette and I am a parent educator. I am against Governor's Bill No. 874, particularly Section 17 (pages 20-21), making changes to Section 10-184, and Section 18 (pages 21-22), making changes to Section 10-1600.

I do not believe that this bill should include the drastic regulation changes proposed. Connecticut's current statutes regarding a parent educator's obligations are clear and do not require any new legislation. The proposed changes are shrouded in an accumulation of unrelated changes to school governance and consolidation. Hiding new regulations regarding basic constitutional rights, which for decades have been actively and publicly fought for, is underhanded, disingenuous and contemptible.

Requesting that parent educators would need to physically appear to register their children with the Department of Education is blatant discrimination. In Connecticut we value our independence and a parent's right to choose what is best for our children. The proposed bill seeks to directly undermine that right that has been honored for many years and also targets us as a group of people. We wouldn't ask other groups to register before exercising their freedoms. We've educated under this law for hundreds of years. Why change it now? My 8-year-old son has been learning about the beginnings of our government and history as a country and nation. This country was founded with passion by people who were escaping the inability to practice their own religion and have freedom. This country stands for the ability to have freedom from oppression. We have stood up time again to say we want our freedoms to choose and home educating our children is not any different. My children belong to me and not the government or the State of Connecticut.

This proposed bill in section 17 is to ask parent educators to appear in person, so they can be physically judged, along with their children since many families would need to bring their children along in order to appear in person. The information is then to be forwarded to the Department of Children and Families. There is no need for this and I strongly believe this is a strong overreach of government power. As a home educating family, we are frequently out in the public eye. My children regularly see their primary care doctors and dentists throughout the year. We are also actively involved in a homeschool group. We visit libraries, museums, and many other public places. I do not believe my children need to be on the radar of our local school system or DCF.

Again, I would like to emphasize my opposition to the bill 874 specifically sections 17 and 18 . The change to Section 10-184 is profoundly discriminatory, and to Section 10-1600 unneeded.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jennifer Ouellette