

My name is Amanda Peters, and I oppose SB 874.

After being homeschooled K-9, I then went on to be valedictorian of my high school class. After that, I graduated from Southern CT State University with degrees in mathematics and in elementary education. My GPA was 4.0. In my final year, I was selected as a Barnard scholar for the Connecticut State University System. After graduating, I taught third grade for seven years, during which time, I continued my education and became a reading specialist. I believe that many of my educational accomplishments and my own love of learning were fostered by homeschooling in my early years. My mother did not have a four-year degree and did not report to our local school district. She researched options and chose a curriculum based on my educational needs. As a professional educator, I do see the value of learning educational theory and philosophy as well as the many hours of field work and student teaching that are required to become a licensed teacher, but my own experience has proven to me that homeschooling without government interference is very successful. My mother was able to pick out curriculum that met my needs and adjust throughout the year for me as an individual. After weighing the pros and cons of homeschooling versus public education, my husband and I have made the decision to homeschool our own children for their elementary years.

Increased regulation of homeschoolers will not benefit homeschooled students, their parents, or the many public schools in the state. Mandated reporting will place an unnecessary burden on homeschool parents as well as the school systems that would need to take time away from their numerous responsibilities to handle the homeschool families in their districts. In addition, regulation opens up the possibility of great inequity between towns within the state. One town may welcome homeschooling and make the reporting process simple while another town may frown on homeschoolers and make the process difficult. In addition, promoting a particular curriculum for homeschoolers to use seems unnecessary and undermines what most homeschool parents are trying to accomplish with their students. The beauty of homeschooling is that it allows one-on-one, individualized instruction. I know many homeschool parents, including myself, spend countless hours researching and evaluating the multitude of curriculums available to find one that will meet the unique needs of our students. If a parent desires to have a curriculum that is aligned with common core, there are plenty of options available. I am concerned that promoting one particular curriculum for homeschool students in the state is one step from requiring parents to follow that curriculum if they desire to homeschool their children. This could be detrimental to the academic achievement of homeschooled students. In *Academic Achievement and Demographic Traits of Homeschool Students: A Nationwide Study*, an article in the *Journal Academic Leadership*, Brian Day reports, "Homeschool student achievement test scores are exceptionally high. The mean scores for every subtest (which are at least 80 percent) are well above those of public school students" (p. 27). You can access the full journal article at the following address, <https://www.nheri.org/academic-achievement-and-demographic-traits-of-homeschool-students-a-nationwide-study-2010/>. Why try to fix something that works? Please do not support SB 874.