

Mister Chairman and members of the Education Committee:

My name is Scott Schaffer. I live in the town of New Milford (District 67) and am opposing Section 17, lines 623-627 of Bill SB 874 "AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATION INITIATIVES AND SERVICES IN CONNECTICUT," dealing with in-person registration of parents providing home instruction to their children.

I understand that our public schools systems need to register the names and contact information for the students who attend their schools. This information can be used to track the progress of students in those schools and communicate with the families who have turned to them to educate their children.

But public schools have no need to track the progress of students for whom they are not responsible. They do not register children attending parochial schools or private schools, nor should they register children being taught under the direction of their parents or guardians (the oldest educational system in the United States). Allocating funds for the "oversight" of students not attending their schools makes no sense.

Worse is the requirement that such registration is mandated to be "in-person". This requires that Connecticut residents use their time and resources to support this public activity, supposedly designed to help them, but receiving no value in return.

Should this registration system be put in place, there are no guidelines as to how this information is to be used. History teaches us that government registration of targeted groups of people is frequently the first step in oppressing them. Some countries require registration of members of opposition political parties. Some require registration of religious or ethnic minorities. Some require registration of intellectuals or human rights advocates.

Before funds are requested by the Education Committee for a targeted registration system for students outside the responsibility of the public school system, this state legislature should clearly lay out the legal basis and guidelines for use of such a registration system to prevent its misuse.

I urge you to delete lines 623-627 of Section 17 of this bill, and the related reference to registration in Section 18, line 652.

Thank you,

Scott Schaffer

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