

February 26, 2019

Legislative Office Building  
300 Capitol Avenue  
Room 3100  
Hartford, CT 06106  
Attn: Education Committee  
*Transmitted via electronic mail to:*  
*edtestimony@cga.ct.gov*

Mr. Chairman Sanchez, Mr. Chairman McCrory, Ranking Members, Vice-Chairs and Members of the Education Committee:

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony. My name is Kayla Will, and I oppose SB 874. Specifically, my testimony will address the bill's language regarding home education in Connecticut. SB 874 is an unnecessary intrusion into the privacy of home educating families. Regulation of home educating families is unessential and counter-productive.

Under current law, Section 10-184 states in part, "All parents and those who have the care of children shall bring them up in some lawful and honest employment and instruct them or cause them to be instructed in reading, writing, spelling, English grammar, geography, arithmetic and United States history and in citizenship, including a study of the town, state and federal governments." Existing law recognizes that parents / legal guardians have the right and obligation to instruct, or provide such instruction, in the upbringing of their children in a manner that they see fit. Other laws exist to address any other concerns, such as overall well-being, as it relates to Connecticut's children.

The proposed law would require that the "parent or person having control of a child who provides home instruction to such child [to] personally appear annually at the school district office and sign a registration form indicating that such child will be receiving home instruction." Such an addition to the current Section 10-184 of the Connecticut General Statute is unnecessary, intrusive and boasts no benefit. Statistically speaking, research shows that the degree of state control and regulation of home education has no correlation to academic achievement. In fact, according to one study, whether a state enforced a high degree of

regulation or no regulation at all had no impact on student academic performance, and test score averages in these realms were nearly identical. Therefore, the cost of such proposed regulation outweighs the benefit of the same.

Additionally, the proposed law states in part that "...the Department of Education shall approve and make available model curricula and frameworks in reading and mathematics for grades prekindergarten to grade four, inclusive, for use by... parents who are registered to provide home school instruction." This additional language to Section 10-184 is also unnecessary. Studies show that one of the top reasons parents choose to homeschool is to customize the curriculum for their child(ren). Current law states only that parents must instruct or cause their children to be instructed in specific subject areas. The provision of model curricula would be an unnecessary step further when current law already provides mandated subjects.

To conclude, please vote "no" to SB 874. The proposed additions to Section 10-184 of the Connecticut General Statute are needless and unduly invasive, promising no advantage or improvement to academic achievement averages amongst home-educated children.

Thank you for your time, and should you have any questions or comments regarding my statement, I would be pleased to discuss them with you.

Sincerely yours,

Kayla J. Will