



*Graduate School of Education
and Allied Professions
Office of the Dean*

Testimony for the
Education Committee of
Bob Hannafin
Dean, Graduate School of Education and Allied Professions
Fairfield University
March 18, 2019

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on **SB 1069, An Act Concerning Various Revisions and Additions to the Education Statutes.**

I speak today as the dean of the Education School at Fairfield University and as President of the CT Chapter of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE CT). AACTE CT represents all 14 of the public and private university-based teacher preparation programs: UConn, the four state universities (Eastern, Western, Central and Southern), Albertus Magnus College, Connecticut College, Mitchell College, University of Bridgeport, University of Saint Joseph, University of Hartford, Fairfield University, Sacred Heart University and Quinnipiac University.

AACTE strongly supports the provisions of this bill. CGS 10-221d requires fingerprint-based background checks to be conducted by each school for each student teacher that will be placed in a nonpaid, noncertified position, within 30 days of direct student contact. This includes the Federal/FBI fee, State fee, and printing/processing fee, which can total \$100-\$130 per background check.

State law requires student teachers to participate in a number of different field placements in order to obtain certification. Most educator preparation programs in Connecticut require students to complete at least two, and often as many as four or five, separate in-district experiences. Each experience requires fingerprinting, which quickly becomes a significant financial burden (up to \$500) for these unpaid placements.

In addition, given the current turn-around time for results, the students are often out of the placement before the results are received.

We strongly support passage of SB 1069. In particular, Section 3 of this bill proposes to waive the state fee for background checks and fingerprinting for student teachers. In addition, the bill moves out the requirement that the background check take place within 30 days of the student teacher placement to 60 days so schools and teachers are not violating state law due to the lack of results being received.

Respectfully,

Bob Hannafin

