

Committee on Children JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6997

AN ACT REQUIRING THE PROVISION OF INFORMATION CONCERNING
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES AND RESOURCES TO STUDENTS,

Title: PARENTS AND GUARDIANS.

Vote Date: 3/7/2019

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/14/2019

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Committee on Children

REASONS FOR BILL:

To require the Department of Education to provide information on the Department of Education's website regarding services and resources provided to victims of domestic abuse; and provide this information to students, parents and guardians who voice their concerns regarding domestic violence and parents and guardians who provide authorization for the transfer of education records.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Lisa Andrews from the CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence expressed her support for this bill. She mentioned that there are many victims currently dealing with their location being disclosed due to the fact that both parents have access to a child's education records. Lisa expressed that the CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence is willing to work alongside legislators in order to ensure that this bill protects the privacy of these victims properly.

The Superintendent of Southington Public Schools, Timothy Connellan expressed his support for this bill. He mentioned that under current law the school cannot deny a parent the right to their child's education records, which can put the child or their other parent at risk. Superintendent Connellan expressed that legislators should work towards providing a process for how school districts should react in the case of a parent requesting information that they cannot legally obtain regarding their children. His suggestion is that legislators make it a requirement for education records to be sent to the courts which would allow the courts to make the decision to release or not release these records to a parent.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

See above.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Hector Morera expressed opposition to this bill. He mentioned that parents should not automatically lose rights to their children simply because they have a pending case. His concern is that some of these pending cases could be false allegations made for one parent to obtain full custody of their children. In addition, he expressed that by excluding a parent from a child's education the state will be excluding the parent from the majority of that child's life since children spend so much time in school. For the reasons stated above he believes that parents should not automatically lose their rights to their children without due process, and therefore opposes this bill.

Reported by: Dea Ballij

Date: 3/11/2019