HB 7258- An Act Concerning The Establishment Of A Firm Graduation Date And The Date For The First Day Of School Sessions.

I am writing to offer both my support and my opposition to the above-referenced bill. The initial bill that removed the 185 day requirement for graduating seniors, as long as the graduation date allows for at least 180 days of school for such seniors, was a common-sense approach to a long-standing issue. This change will allow districts across the state to save money by not having to continually reschedule events related to graduation. It will also allow families to plan for friends and relatives who may be coming from out of town to celebrate a student’s graduation.

The second portion of this bill, which appears to have been added after the fact, would require that schools commence regular school sessions for the school year on any day after the first Monday in September (Labor Day Holiday). I’m opposed to this portion of the bill just as I was supposed to the very unsuccessful regional calendar approach that was abandoned just last year. There’s no data or reasoning to support this change. In our district starting that late would prevent us from having a full February vacation which is something that we believe provides a health benefit to our students and is a highly prized aspect of our community that many parents would not want to see disappear. Much as the regional calendar was an abysmal failure, this one-size-fits-all approach will no better serve any district.

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