

Education Committee Public Hearing

March 17, 2021

Supporting Testimony for SB 1034: An Act Concerning Minority Teacher Recruitment and Retention

Dear Senator McCrory, Representative Sanchez and distinguished members of the education committee,

My name is Rebecca Banever, I live in Glastonbury, Connecticut and work in the Public Schools as a special education paraprofessional. I am also an applicant for the Teacher Residency Program and would like your support for SB 1034 An Act Concerning Minority Teacher Recruitment And Retention.

I was born in Tegucigalpa, Honduras and adopted at the age of two into a very diverse family. Since I was little, I knew I wanted to be a teacher. I attribute much of this goal to the many unique educational opportunities I was afforded growing up, such as being homeschooled and taking classes during high school at Tunxis Community College. These experiences cultivated in me a genuine love for learning and I knew that my purpose in life was to inspire children to share that same love for education.

When I began my undergraduate education at a private college, I was ecstatic to begin my journey toward becoming a teacher. What I didn't account for was the impact that attending a college with very little minority representation would have on me. After experiencing numerous incidents of both implicit biases and blatant racism, my spirit was destroyed. I became disappointed and resentful of the fact that an entire school made up of hundreds of students and faculty had a severe lack of understanding and appreciation for diversity.

Since college, I have been searching for a certification program that can appreciate and celebrate diversity. I knew once I read about the Teacher Residency Program it was a perfect fit for me because it takes into account my values and passion for social justice and change. Whether I get into this program or not, I believe that this program is owed to the people of Connecticut. If there ever was a time to prove that Connecticut is both addressing its alarming lack of minority representation and taking action to obtain justice and create opportunities for minorities, now is that time.

I am currently an applicant to this Teacher Residency Program and am in support of passing SB 1034 An Act Concerning Minority Teacher Recruitment And Retention not only for the betterment of my own future, but also for the future of the students whose lives I will impact by being a part of this Teacher Residency Program. Please fully fund this program.

Thank you for your time,
Rebecca Banever