

I am writing to express my firm opposition to the new provisions in the current proposed legislation HB8531. I have homeschooled my 4 children for 13.5 years. Two just graduated with highest honors from CCRI. Of those, one is going on to a pre-dental program at UCONN, and one to Emerson College to major in film and media. A third just graduated Summa Cum Laude from URI. My youngest is thriving as a homeschooled sophomore. Three of my children are typical students. The fourth, my daughter who is headed to Emerson, is not. She has mild learning issues and ADHD. She excelled in school until third grade, when she started having difficulty in class, resulting in such distress about attending school that she lost 8 pounds in 10 days. Her teacher called me regularly, telling me she was distracted and not focused, but when I asked if she thought she had any learning issues, assured me repeatedly that she did not. I tell this not to criticize the teacher; I recognize that she is human and fallible, and my daughter was one of 25 students in her class. I knew my daughter best, and I knew what she needed. The proposed language in this legislation would strip parents of their right to make such decisions for their own children and place it in the hands of people who don't have the same intimate knowledge as a parent. Under this legislation, the school district would have been able to deny or significantly delay my homeschooling plans, which would have been detrimental at best, disastrous at worst, for my daughter.