

HB 6470

PA 659 (Vetoed)

1971

Education

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House

5132-5138

Senate

3402

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**H-118**

**CONNECTICUT  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE**

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Saturday, June 5, 1971

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Mr. Hannon of the 16th.

MR. HANNON:

First time since January, I don't know whether I am for or against a bill. The highest of respect to my esteemed colleague from the 10th district, we will however police our own streets, thank you just the same.

MR. SPEAKER:

All those in favor indicate by saying Aye. Opposed. The bill is passed.

CLERK:

Page 8, Calendar 575, House Bill 6470 - An Act Concerning Special Education for Preschool Children.

MR. SPEAKER:

Representative Coatsworth.

MR. COATSWORTH:

I move for the acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

MR. SPEAKER:

Will you remark.

MR. COATSWORTH:

This bill will incorporate a technical and substantial change in existing statutes covering special education programs. The present law such criteria for school age children who will participate in this program. The criteria states that children are eligible for this program whose educational potential will be damaged without participation in the program. This is a

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negative which is difficult to enact objectively. This change is much needed and I urge passage of this bill.

MR. SPEAKER:

Representative Collins.

MR. COLLINS:

I do think that there is a significant change in the language of this bill, whether or not we are in this state already to adopt the policy that this change would indicate that the special education would benefit primarily students whose potential would be substantially increased. I am not quite sure that the state of Connecticut is ready for such education to help those ability or potential would be increased rather than helping those who are less fortunate as the present law now allows. I oppose this bill on the grounds that passage of this bill would result in the expenditure of at least \$300,000 and money for which has not been appropriated. I think it is a mistake to take on a program of this size without either budget that will be before this House next Monday.

MR. SPEAKER:

Representative Avcollie.

MR. AVCOLLIE:

I simply want to call MR. Collin's attention to the fact the present special education law does in fact address itself to gifted children as well as those that are non gifted.

MR. SPEAKER:

Gentleman from the 38th.

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MR. LOWELL:

To Representative Coatsworth, is there anyone under the age that would go to school who wouldn't be eligible under this bill.

MR. SPEAKER:

Gentleman from the 76th care to respond.

MR. COATSWORTH:

I think the best possible answer I can give is that in addition to providing this program, I think on the floor of the House today we are dealing in semantics. One set of semantics are negative and therefore hard to deal with as an administrative agency and the other is positive and much more readily acceptable. I think positive language is better than negative.

MR. SPEAKER:

Further remarks.

MR. LOWELL:

I'd like to ask that question again and also I asked if there is anyone who wouldn't be eligible if this passed.

MR. SPEAKER:

Gentleman care to respond.

MR. LOWELL:

It seems to me that this is an extension of the educational system just looking at it quickly from birth until they finally go to school, because I don't see that anybody would be ineligible and I think that Mr. Collins estimate of 300,000 is a minor estimate of the cost, while I think there are some meritorious thoughts, I don't think we should go this far at this particular time.

MR. SPEAKER:

Representative LaGrotta.

MR. LA GROTTA:

No question that this bill has merit. I think we should well understand that this is a very serious and expensive extension. It is not paid for by the state entirely, 66 2/3% are, but a third of it will go on the town. The funds are not provided herewith to do that. I think you better bear in mind what you are doing here and be prepared to put some money where your heart is on this thing or you are going to have to take it home and pay for it home.

MR. SPEAKER:

Gentleman from the 9th.

MR. KLEBANOFF:

I move it be taken by roll call.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question is on a roll call vote. All those in favor indicate by saying Aye. A roll call will be ordered.

Does the Clerk have business to be read in.

CLERK:

The Clerk has a favorable report of the joint standing committee on Appropriations. House Bill 7238 - An Act Concerning a Commission of Special Revenue.

MR. SPEAKER:

Tabled for the calendar.

Gentleman from the 9th.

MR. KLEBANOFF:

For the benefit of those returning, we apparently have some confusion about this bill. I would like to clarify the situation. This bill specifically refers to Section 10-76A, subsection 1E and in that subsection we are only talking about the children who are mentally retarded, physically handicapped, socially and emotionally maladjusted or suffering from an identifiable learning disability, which disability is amenable to correction or at the rate of development may be improved by special education. What we are talking about here is an objected test that is semantics. Let me use an illustration with my own child and I do not like to do so but I think it is important. I have a child who is physically handicapped, in that she is partially deaf. How could anyone tell me that her education will be harmed without special ed except by negative test, except by refusing the test or except by denying certain opportunities. However, this child can be tested, she can be put in a room, she can have a hearing aid put on her and she can be exposed to classroom facilities and one can't say whether or not she can hear with a hearing aid or not. And if she can hear with that hearing aid, then there has been a test that has been met. She can be substantially increased and this is all we are doing. It is impossible to do negative testing. We are not trying to put a \$300,000 price tag on a bill. We are not trying to give anybody a special package to take home. We are

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trying to help the children here who can be identified by proper testing.

MR. SPEAKER:

Further remarks. If the members will be seated. Gentleman from the 95th.

MR. SARASIN:

I think the important thing here is the cost. On several other occasions I have taken to my feet in this House to remind the members that we are doing it again. We are mandating a program upon the community and we are not providing the funds for it to enable the community to carry it out. Cost of education in our communities is the highest item of expense that they have. I oppose the bill.

MR. SPEAKER:

Mr. Avcollie of the 94th.

MR. AVCOLLIE:

I don't rise to quarrel, as a chairman of the subcommittee on this matter, I think regretably the people on the other side of the aisle have misinterpreted this bill. We are deleting three words of a bill we passed in 1969 and we are adding two words, this is existing legislation. There is no money on this program. The State Department of Education can administer it for the benefit of the towns under existing budget figures. There is no additional money. I support the bill.

MR. SPEAKER:

Gentleman from the 122nd.



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MR. STEVENS:

Very briefly, it is not a partisan matter, it is a budgetary matter. Despite what has just been said, the addition of these two words by adding substantially increased, and taking out irreparably diminished without, will double the number of youngsters in the state of Connecticut who would be eligible under this program. I think the bill should be defeated.

MR. SPEAKER:

I suggest we proceed with the vote. Members be seated. The machine will be open. Has every member voted. Is your vote recorded in the fashion you wish. The machine will be locked. The Clerk will take a tally. The machine will have to be open again, let's try it again. Has every member voted. Is your vote recorded in the fashion you wish. The machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally. The Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

Total number voting	153
Necessary for passage	77
Those voting Yea	83
Those voting Nay	70
Absent and not voting	24.

MR. SPEAKER:

The bill is passed.

CLERK:

Page 41, Disagreeing Action, Calendar 434, House Bill 7568

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