

PA 11-027

SB0933

Education	24, 36-37, 57-59, 62-64, 99-101, 116-117, 424-425, 435-436, 466	19
House	3780-3793	14
<u>Senate</u>	<u>841-847, 889-891</u>	<u>10</u>
		43

**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

**EDUCATION
PART 1
1 – 342**

**2011
INDEX**

Coleman.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GEORGE A. COLEMAN: First of all I want to say, good morning. And I'm happy to know that 55 is just the beginning of getting old, so that I still have a lot more flexibility here in terms of what I can look forward to.

I think that it's particularly a pleasure to talk to you this morning. We all get a sense that there are lots of innovations that are expected in education, a lot of adjustments in order to meet the budgetary conditions of our time.

And our big challenge is how do we preserve that which is good? How do we weed out those things that might not be serving us? And how do we continue to make sure that Connecticut students are among the most competitive in the country? So I think that's all -- that's our big charge that we're going to have to be working together towards the foreseeable future in order to make that happen.

So I'm very privileged to comment on some bills, particularly those that we are supportive of. We've provided written testimony and I'm looking forward to whatever questions you might have to better explore or give advice relative to how we might proceed based upon our understandings today.

I want to start by looking at or commenting on Raised Bill 930. Of course, that is a bill concerning school entry age. A part of what we've been charged with as the State is to reduce the achievement gap.

A great deal of the achievement gap is represented in an initial start gap for many

HB 6326
HB 6319
HB 6325
HB 6385
SB 929
SB 933

student, which is -- is less than a tenth of what would be needed per pupil.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GEORGE A. COLEMAN: That's right.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Okay. Any other questions from members of the committee?

Representative Hovey.

REP. HOVEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning, Commissioner.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GEORGE A. COLEMAN: Good morning.

REP. HOVEY: I had a question with regards to S.B. 933, which is the Act Concerning Substitute Teachers. And my little cheat sheet says that SDE is fine with the concept if it's limited.

Can you just describe what kind of limitations you would like to see around that? I have to say I have concerns about non-degreed people being in front of our children any time, especially within academia, when a substitute is supposed to be actually carrying on and implementing the teacher's lesson plans.

So could you just give some --

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GEORGE A. COLEMAN: We are generally supportive of the need to have a baccalaureate level person when a regularly certified teacher cannot be the class.

A part of what we understand, one, is often the difficulty of school districts to be able to have a baccalaureate person, particularly

in short-term situations.

The other situation is in specialties sometimes. Sometimes by virtue of an individual, say, like in the preschool, if you have a preschool class, an individual who might have an associate in preschool might be better, a better substitute for that class than a baccalaureate person in biology. So these are some of the -- of those reservations.

You know, we generally to reinforce the fact that we want the highest credentialed person as possible, but we do recognize sometimes that that might not be practical given the -- particularly a short-term situation.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good afternoon and welcome. We appreciate your testimony. And it's addressing a variety of bills.

Look, just as a follow-up to Representative Fleischmann's comments about Senate Bill 930, on the school entrance age, which is a bill of importance to me, as I'm sure it is to everyone.

In your testimony you stated there are approximately 3300 students a year that could -- who are five years of age between October 1st and January 1st.

Do you have -- and I appreciate your wanting the agency obviously let you work on this issue because the Governor has certainly indicated that's something that's of an importance to him.

safety purposes. There are some empty seats that have opened in a room. And we still have Room 1A available for those folks if there aren't any seats here.

With that, next on our list, under -- starting under Senate Bill 930 -- and they're going to sneak in and give some testimony on 933 as well, I believe -- is Ray Rossomando and Gloria Peduzzi from CEA.

Who would kindly introduce -- introduce yourselves so that the testimony reflects the comments of the speaker.

RAY ROSSOMANDO: Sure.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you.

RAY ROSSOMANDO: Senator Stillman, members of the Education Committee, my name is Ray Rossomando. I'm legislative coordinator for the Connecticut Education Association. I'm accompanied here today by Gloria Peduzzi who represents teachers in employment discussions with local districts in the South Central Connecticut area.

We are here today to testify on Senate Bill 933 regarding substitute teachers. And also Senate bill 930 regarding the school entrance age.

Regarding Senate Bill 930, school entrance age, CEA opposes the proposal as written. The proposal impacts children who turn five between October 1st and January 2nd and delays their entry into kindergarten by a year.

There are two sides to this coin. Teachers of early grades who are members support this idea and the potential to ensure children are ready

to learn in a developmental sense. On the flip side, as previous people have spoken to, including Commissioner Coleman, unless those children who are kept out have access to affordable preschool more harm than good could result. This is clearly an achievement gap issue.

CEA supports changing the school start age to ensure that more children will have undergone a level of developmental maturity that will promote success, however it does not support this change if it is isolated from an expansion of school readiness seats and appropriate funding that would fulfill the educational needs of children who would be prevented from starting school as a result of this legislation.

GLORIA PEDUZZI: Good morning. I'm here testifying -- Senate Bill 933. And the Connecticut Education Association opposes any legislation that would lower the qualification standards for substitute teachers.

In 1993 there was such a waiver provision that a bachelor's degree could be waived by request of a superintendent of schools to the Department of Education. That was changed in 2009 so that the weaker provision is now out of the legislation.

Some may argue that by lowering the standards it would be easier to get substitute teachers. However we contend that the reason for the shortage of substitute teachers is twofold. First of all, the compensation is a little over \$10 an hour for substitute teachers and that includes no benefits.

Similarly, once a teacher signs up to become a substitute teacher, that teachers is then

disqualified for unemployment compensation.
So that's two of the reasons for the shortage.

Lowering the standards may be one strategy to increase the pool, but it's not the best strategy. We think that increasing the compensation for substitutes with a bachelor's degree and exempting substitute teacher work from being a disqualifying factor for unemployment compensation are approaches that would better serve our need to have quality substitutes in our schools.

And when talking to teachers in my work I find that it is not only they are concerned that there aren't enough substitutes, but more importantly there aren't enough quality substitutes.

Thank you.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, both. We appreciate your testimony.

Questions for either one of them?

Senator Boucher.

SENATOR BOUCHER: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

And thank you so much for testifying today on two very important issues. I have a question first on the school start age. And your arguments are very well founded.

SB 930

There is however a lot of evidence, of those that are proposing this, that we are out of line or out of sync with the vast majority of other states that have a start age that might be this new language that is being proposed. Have you found that to be the case as well?

that.

SENATOR STILLMAN: I appreciate that comment. I disagree with a -- that it goes in the opposite direction. I really do.

I think we obviously have two issues to tackle here. It's pre-K, appropriate pre-K education along with the entrance age, and along with universal all-day kindergarten, which is a whole other topic. So -- and is not in -- and not in this bill. This bill direct -- just addresses the issue of age.

And I guess I'm somewhat prejudiced because my son started school when he was 4 and a half. And I'm glad to say it was many, many years ago --

GLORIA PEDUZZI: Madam Chairman, my daughter did also.

SENATOR STILLMAN: -- and he turned out just fine.

So we -- but I think what it does is it also reflects the fact that parents understand whether their children are mature enough to handle situations that could confront them in schools.

So thank you.

Anyone else have any questions?

Yes. Representative Genga.

REP. GENGA: Thank you, Senator Stillman.

I'd like to ask you about substitute teachers. What do you think are the qualities that are necessary for a qualified substitute teacher?

SB 933

GLORIA PEDUZZI: Well, on a personal level I have lots of ideas, but certainly CEA supports the existing law that says minimally a substitute teacher must have a bachelor's degree.

REP. GENGA: But what does a degree do that a person -- whose parent doesn't have a degree? What's the significance towards the teaching?

RAY ROSSOMANDO: Well, a bachelor's degree in general has been viewed upon by the employment world as a screening for candidates who are able to achieve a certain level of educational attainment.

And, you know, Commissioner Coleman said earlier that, you know, it is possible that somebody could have an associate's degree in early childhood and be appropriate. And while that is possible, I think without having at least a bachelor's degree as a threshold, it just opens up the floodgates to just about anybody.

And that's a concern when teachers have to go into a classroom and turn over lesson plans to substitute teachers and have some sort of confidence that they'll be able to carry out those plans in a way that will be effective for the children.

REP. GENGA: I taught school and I'm coming from my experiences. And so I ask, what do you think the good qualities are? Because a degree in itself, while it has significance, classroom management is more important for a substitute teacher.

And you're right about the pay. That pay hasn't increased in probably 15 years anything significantly, but with the budget restraints and the superintendents of each school's

district having to clarify who's qualified to meet their requirements versus, we'll say, somebody who substitute teaches for a day or two, versus a long-term sub, then I could see a difference.

But the problem filling in for just a few days, from my experience is, I've had wonderful people who could do that better than somebody who had a degree.

I just want to throw that out there.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, Representative.

Any other questions?

Thank you both very much. We appreciate your input.

Going back to the public officials, is Representative Fritz here? Oh, there she is.

After Representative Fritz, we'll then go back to the public portion. And Jake Siegel will be -- will follow Representative Fritz.

Welcome, Representative.

REP. FRITZ: Thank you.

For the record, I'm Representative Mary Fritz of the 90th District, serving parts of the towns of Wallingford and Cheshire.

I have, I believe, submitted my testimony to you already and it's -- with the charts included, it's about 19 pages. So rather than read to you, because I know what that's like, I thought I would do highlights for you.

HB6385

And also I want to share with the committee --

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL: Chairman Stillman, Chairman Fleischmann, esteemed members of the Education Committee, thank you. I'm State Senator John Kissel, serving the people of Enfield, Somers, Suffield, Windsor, Windsor Locks, East Granby and Granby. And I'm here to speak on two meals, and neither of these bills will entail any cost to the people of the state of Connecticut.

The first bill that I'm speaking in favor of is Raised Bill Number 6319, AN ACT CONCERNING HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS FOR KOREAN WAR VETERANS. It's my understanding that this bill probably has been kicking around for the last couple of years, but it came to my attention in the last year because I attended several of the award ceremonies put on by our former Secretary of State Susan Bysiewicz on honoring Korean War veterans.

And indeed, the one in Enfield, there's so many Korean War veterans still in Enfield that we had to split it into two separate ceremonies in excess of a hundred folks.

And as part of one of the ceremonies I will say one of my constituents, Robert Greiner said, you know what you can do for us above and beyond this? They honor World War II vets by allowing towns to give out diplomas. And it would be really nice if you could do that for us.

9B933

It's my understanding -- I was observing this committee's actions earlier in the day and I believe it was Chairman Fleischmann had indicated that these kinds of proposals need to have a certain period of time so that potential employers would not get misled by

someone coming in with essentially a GED or a high school equivalency degree.

But my dad, John Charles Kissel, God bless his soul -- still healthy with my mom, he's 77 years old. He served in Korea. So these folks are in their seventies primarily. And I think it's a great way to allow towns, if they should desire, to so honor them and I think it's time is now. So I would urge the members of this committee and the cochairs to support that proposal.

The second bill I speak in favor of is Raised Bill 933, AN ACT CONCERNING SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS. I will admit that in past years this hasn't had an awful lot of success, but while the State has an extremely laudable goal of requiring bachelor's degrees to be the criterion to be a substitute teacher here in the State of Connecticut, there's an awful folks that have come up to me over the last few years from North-central Connecticut. They had spent probably over a decade being substitute teachers. They may have associate's degree. They've proven themselves in the classroom year after year after year and they've indicated, why are we somehow not being grandfathered in this process? Why are we being pushed out?

And so what this particular proposal does, and I think it sets a good criterion, in that it would be upon special request of the superintendent of schools to get a waiver from the department for a particular instance.

Not only would that address an instance such as I have encountered in the town of Enfield where there's someone that has a storied past as a substitute teacher, but I think it would also be very helpful for some of the smaller

communities in Connecticut that just might be scrambling just to find people that can actually do this role.

And I'd be more than happy to answer any questions on either of these two bills.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you for your good testimony and for listening to what went before your testimony.

I just want to say this bill is before us because we recognize that Korean War veterans are of an age where it would be an honor for them to receive these honorary diplomas, but it wouldn't necessarily have an impact on the labor markets.

HB 319

My father-in-law is a Korean War veteran who has a few years of your dad. I get that and that the concern was raised when it comes to much more recent conflicts, but I share your feelings about this bill a hundred percent.

Are there comments or questions from members of the committee?

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good to see you, Senator. Thank you for your remarks and support today. I attended, shortly after we passed the bill allowing World War II vets to receive their high school diploma, that year my -- the high school in Waterford did honor two people that came forward that had not been here to receive their diplomas. And it was very touching.

The students were overwhelmed -- the ones that were graduating -- that they were overwhelmed

to testify in support of Senate Bill 933 regarding substitute teachers. And I'm not going to repeat the testimony that previously preceded me in support of the testimony -- or the bill, excuse me. I just want to raise one additional point.

One of the experiences that we've seen in our district is that we have currently paraprofessionals that are in the classrooms and my understanding is that they do not need bachelor's degrees in order to be a paraprofessional.

And they've also been an asset for our district in times where they might need a substitute under an emergency circumstance, or if a teacher is going away for a week, that para might be a natural fit to be a substitute in those situations.

Because we now have this requirement that the bachelor's degree is needed we've automatically excluded those individuals from being able to sub. And there may be some circumstances where they really are the best individuals to fill in those spots. And I think this is a very carefully tailored piece of legislation that would allow for a waiver under those types of circumstances and therefore I support the bill.

Thank you.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Thank you for your testimony and for adding the discussion.

I've heard various points of view around this issue for several years now and you're the first person who pointed out the role that paraprofessionals sometimes play in jumping in as substitutes. So thank you.

Are there comments or questions from members of the committee?

Representative Genga.

REP. GENGA: Thank you, Chairman Fleischmann.

Thank you for your testimony. That's an excellent point. In my classroom over the years many times, a full year working with paraprofessionals. And the point is that the CEA made a proposal that teachers now, with a four-year degree, or substitutes with a four-year degree are low pay. With paraprofessionals, at my school system, they are paid significantly much more.

And certainly (inaudible). That's an excellent point.

PAUL COPES: I appreciate that, because I don't think it is an issue necessarily of a shortage of substitutes. What we have seen is h as created a problem in our district where we want to use our paraprofessionals in that manner. We are unable to now.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: Are there questions? If not, thank you for your helpful testimony.

PAUL COPES: Thanks.

REP. FLEISCHMANN: We'll go to Ann Grosjean to be followed by Representative Diana Urban.

ANN CAVANAUGH GROSJEAN: Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to allow me to speak in support of Senate Bill Number 930, AN ACT CONCERNING THE SCHOOL ENTRANCE AGE.

I retired in June of this year after 35 years

**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

**EDUCATION
PART 2
343 – 672**

2011

4-1
4-2

Advocating for teachers
and public education

**Connecticut Education
Association**

Governance

Philip Apruzzese, President
Sheila Cohen, Vice President
Cheryl Prevost, Secretary
Jeff Leake, Treasurer
Maureen Honan, NEA Director
Tom Nicholas, NEA Director

Executive Office

Dr. John Yrchik
Executive Director

Government Relations

Vincent J. Loffredo, Director
Capitol Place, Suite 500
21 Oak Street
Hartford, CT 06106-8001
860-525-5641, 800-842-4316
Fax: 860-725-6362
vinniel@cea.org

Affiliated with the
National Education
Association

Testimony of

*Ray Rossomando and Gloria Peduzzi
Connecticut Education Association*

Before the

Education Committee

Re: Senate Bill 930 An Act Concerning the School Entrance Age
and

Senate Bill 933 An Act Concerning Substitute Teachers

February 23, 2011

Good afternoon Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Education Committee. My name is Ray Rossomando, Legislative Coordinator for the Connecticut Education Association, representing 40,000 teachers across the state. I am accompanied today by Gloria Peduzzi, a Connecticut Education Association UniServ Representative. Ms. Peduzzi represents teachers in discussions with their employers regarding contract negotiations, human resource concerns, and other matters affecting their employment and work environment.

We testify in opposition to SB 930 An Act Concerning the School Entrance Age as written, and in opposition of SB 933 An Act Concerning Substitute Teachers.

SB 930 An Act Concerning the School Entrance Age

SB 930 would change the minimum age at which a child may enter kindergarten, phasing in cutoff dates that ultimately would prohibit children who turn 5-years of age after October 1st from attending kindergarten in a public school.

Teachers of kindergarten and other early grades continually stress the importance of children in their classroom being "ready to learn" – a term that can refer to maturity levels as well as the sort of preparation that results in children knowing the alphabet, identifying colors and shapes, and understanding the basics of numeracy. Children who are ready to learn have undergone developmental maturity that makes them more likely to succeed in a formal school setting. The proposed change would increase the probability that children starting kindergarten will have reached a developmental level conducive to the rigors and socialization of the kindergarten curriculum. However, the bill does not address the challenge of ensuring that more of our young learners are prepared to begin kindergarten.

In fact, the proposed policy change enlarges a population of early learners – those turning five years of age between October 1st and January 2nd – who, under this bill, would no longer be permitted to attend kindergarten in a public school. It is the educational opportunities for this latter group for which we remain concerned.

Connecticut Education Association supports changing the school start age to ensure that more children will have undergone a level of developmental maturity that will promote success. However, it does not support this change if it is isolated from an expansion of School Readiness seats, and appropriate funding that would fulfill the educational needs of children who would be prevented from starting school as a result of this legislation.

It is critically important that children start school prepared to learn. It is doubly important for those who begin school already far behind their age-related peers. Children who do not start school prepared to learn are less likely to catch up to their peers and more likely to be victims of the achievement gap. This is the fundamental rationale for programs like Head Start and Connecticut's School Readiness program.

The distressing truth in Connecticut is that some children do not experience their first true educational opportunity until kindergarten. Others have comparatively fewer opportunities than their age-related peers. For these groups, crossing the achievement gap is already a daunting challenge. If, as a result of this bill, their first true educational opportunity is delayed another year, that journey will be all the longer.

In considering the merits of the school age change, we urge committee members to ensure that there is a continuum of age appropriate learning opportunities for all children, and especially those facing challenges, such as poverty, inextricably linked to the achievement gap.

SB 933 An Act Concerning Substitute Teachers

Regarding SB 933, Connecticut Education Association opposes legislation that would lower qualification standards for substitute teachers.

Eighteen years ago, the legislature instituted quality standards that required substitute teachers to have a bachelor's degree. A waiver provision in the original 1993 legislation was removed in 2009, strengthening this quality standard consistent with efforts to ensure that students are taught by highly qualified teachers. SB 933 would roll back the improvements made in 2009, essentially reinstating the weaker, 1993 provision.

There are proponents of this legislation who may argue that lowering standards is intended to increase the availability of substitute teachers. Such solution presumes that a shortage in substitute teachers is caused by high standards. But with compensation of substitute teachers barely exceeding ten dollars an hour, and participation on substitute teachers lists a disqualifying factor for unemployment compensation, it is no wonder that there is a shortage.

Lowering standards may be one strategy for broadening a pool of candidates, but it is not the most desirable one. Increasing daily compensation commensurate with a bachelor's degree and exempting substitute teacher work from being a disqualifying factor for purposes of unemployment compensation are approaches that would more likely ensure higher standards in our classrooms.

Thank you.



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE VINCENT J. CANDELORA
EIGHTY-SIXTH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
 ROOM 4200
 HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591

TOLL FREE. (800) 842-1423
 CAPITOL (860) 240-8700
 EMAIL Vin.Candelora@housegop.ct.gov

DEPUTY REPUBLICAN LEADER

MEMBER
EXECUTIVE & LEGISLATIVE NOMINATIONS
FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE
REGULATIONS REVIEW COMMITTEE
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Testimony of
 State Representative Vincent J. Candelora
 In Support of Senate Bill 933
AN ACT CONCERNING SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS
 Before the Education Committee

February 23, 2011

Good morning Chairmen Fleischmann and Stillman, Ranking Members Giuliano and Boucher, and members of the Education Committee. I am testifying in support of S.B. No. 933 AN ACT CONCERNING SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS. This bill would merely give superintendents the ability to seek a waiver from the State Department of Education for an individual who does not hold a bachelor's degree, but otherwise is qualified to work as a substitute teacher.

In North Branford, one of our schools has a five year paraprofessional who would substitute teach in emergency situations for the past 4 years. Under current law, this person is in now prohibited from subbing because they do not hold a bachelor's degree. While I understand the public policy for requiring bachelor degree's for substitutes, I believe this bill improves upon the policy by giving some flexibility to a superintendent if, in their judgment, it's in the best interest of the district.

Thank you for the hearing on SB 933 and I wish to express my support of the bill and the committee's favorable action.

Respectfully Yours,

Vincent Candelora
 State Representative

10-24

Testimony
Education Committee
Sharon M. Palmer
February 23, 2011

Good morning Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann and members of the committee. I am Sharon Palmer, President of AFT Connecticut a diverse 28,000 member AFT-CIO Union.

There are 4 bills on which I would like to remark: SB 933, HB 6324, HB 6326, HB 6385.

We ask you to oppose SB 933, Section 10-145 and proposed changes are a perfect example of "foot in the door" or "camel's nose under the tent" legislation. In 2009 a "small change" was made to allow non-BA degree persons to substitute for 10 days or less. Now you have a proposal to allow the Commissioner of Education to waive the BA requirements. What's next? This is a slippery slope to lowered standards.

HB 6324 is called teacher employment criteria, but really is about teacher seniority. Unfortunately neither of these is what we should address. We should be working on teacher evaluation, mentoring and professional development. What we really want is highly qualified and highly effective teachers.

Some school administrators say that seniority is quality blind. We suggest those individuals need to look in the mirror and ask themselves how a teacher becomes senior if they are not a quality employee.

This bill ignores the "journey" and looks only at the "destination". It is the journey through professional development, mentoring and evaluation that make the destination of seniority a well designed path for the journey.



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

EDUCATION COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2011

S.B. No. 930 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE SCHOOL ENTRANCE AGE.

Recommend approval of the bill as written. The bill would change kindergarten age beginning 7/1/12 so that much younger (4 year olds) and older (7 year olds) would not be starting school at the same time. Right now schools have a tough time teaching kids who can range in age from 4.5 to 7 years. SDE would like additional School Readiness funding for students in poorest communities so they could get the additional preschool year in this transition period. Since there is no recommended funding for this we should oppose this if it is added to the bill!

H.B. No. 6326 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE RESPONSE OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO REPORTS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT.

This is the right thing to do school personnel, including prospective teachers, should be vetted to make sure they do not have a history of abusing children. For administrative flexibility both from the local school district and State Department of Education perspective inquiries to the Child Abuse Registry should be available electronically. If they are not, the bill's implementation should be tied to availability of electronic data sharing.

S.B. No. 933 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS.

This allows a superintendent of local schools to request that the bachelor's degree requirement for substitute teachers be waived. SDE is fine with this if limited. Neutral for OPM; no fiscal impact expected.

H.B. No. 6319 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS FOR KOREAN WAR VETERANS.

There are Korean War veterans who left high school to serve their country. As we have done for similar groups of World War II veterans, it seems a fitting tribute to allow a local board of education to award these folks their high school diplomas (albeit sixty years later).

H.B. No. 6324 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING TEACHER EMPLOYMENT CRITERIA.

This bill would require, for school districts which do not have layoff provisions in their contracts, to develop layoff procedures which do not put seniority as the primary reason for determining who gets retained and who gets laid off. While this appears to

HB6325
HB6385
SB932
SB929
HB6320
HB6318
SB1025

H – 1103

**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2011**

**VOL.54
PART 12
3772 – 4108**

cd/rgd
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

89
May 19, 2011

Those voting Nay 6
Those absent and not voting 10

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

The bill passes.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar Number 403.

THE CLERK:

On page 22, Calendar 403, Senate Bill Number 933,
AN ACT CONCERNING SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS, favorable
report of the Committee on Education.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Representative Fleischmann, you have the floor,
sir.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I move acceptance of the joint
committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

The question is on acceptance of the joint
committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

Representative Fleischmann, you have the floor.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In essence this measure before us would restore
power that the education commissioner of Connecticut

enjoyed for many years, which was to waive requirements that substitute teachers, employed by local or regional boards of education, have at least a bachelor's degree.

Those waivers were given in circumstances where people were able to demonstrate that they were appropriate individuals to be at the front of the classroom. There were many communities in Connecticut that relied on those teachers with waivers to be substitutes.

We had gotten rid of this requirement a couple of years ago. We've heard from a lot of districts that it's created hardships for them. So in essence this would be easing a burden on our localities and our local school systems and potentially reducing some of the costs they face. So I hope all members of this Chamber will act in the bipartisan manner that the Education Committee did and support this measure before us.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Thank you very much, sir.

Representative Ayala of the 128th, you have the floor, sir.

cd/rgd
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

91
May 19, 2011

REP. AYALA (128th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise this afternoon to support this bill and thank the chairman of Education for moving this forward.

As a teacher in the school system I've seen how we've often left out people who had very interesting life experiences who did not have a bachelor's degree that could manage a classroom and do the job necessary to be a substitute. And unfortunately in certain circumstances the district is not able to get enough substitutes to ensure that there is an adult in the classroom.

So I believe that this bill goes a long way in addressing some of those concerns and also creates the opportunity for those individuals that may not have a bachelor's degree, but yet have the life skills and life experience to be able to apply for these positions. And based on what the characteristics and the criteria in the bill -- be able to substitute in our school systems.

So thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Thank you very much, sir.

Will you remark further?

Representative Candelora of the 86th, you have the floor, sir.

REP. CANDELORA (86th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I too rise in support of this bill and I want to thank the chairman and the ranking members of the Education Committee for bringing this forward. I think not only does it help improve being able to get substitute teachers I had a constituent who had approached me where they were allowed to be a paraprofessional in the classroom. And we certify our paraprofessionals.

They do a wonderful job in the classroom and what this will do is allow our paraprofessionals, who may not have a bachelor's degree, but have the certification to be able to substitute in that classroom if the teacher is absent at any time. So this gives great flexibility to the school districts and I thank the chairman for bringing this forward.

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Thank you very much, sir.

Representative Giuliano of the 23rd, you have the

floor, madam.

REP. GIULIANO (23rd):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in support of this bill. It came through the Legislature's Education Committee unanimously. I think that it helps to give a limited opportunity for superintendents of schools to request a waiver from the commissioner of education.

Again, the commissioner and the expectation of the State Department of Education is that these circumstances would be limited and infrequent, but there are circumstances, particularly in rural school districts or small school districts when finding adequately qualified substitute teachers may be problematic, particularly when an individual who is functioning in an instructional capacity within the school would like to or would -- it actually would be in the best interests of students to employ that person on a short-term basis as a substitute teacher.

This allows for a very narrow window of waiver infrequently to be implemented, but I think it gives the latitude that is appropriate to superintendents.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Thank you very much, madam.

Representative LeGeyt of the 17th, you have the floor, sir.

REP. LeGEYT (17th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Good afternoon, sir.

REP. LeGEYT (17th):

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this legislation and to align my remarks with those of Representative Ayala, recently given in regard to the benefit of having a bachelor's degree as a requirement for a substitute teacher.

In my career as a public school teacher I experience many times situations where substitute teachers who had bachelor's degrees were not very qualified to be substitute teachers. And so I would attest to the fact that a bachelor's degree is not necessarily a criteria that could be used to gain the work of a good substitute teacher. And so I rise to support this bill.

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Thank you very much, sir.

Representative Lavielle of the 143rd, you have the floor, madam.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I also rise in support of this bill and particularly because this is such a -- the activity of teaching is not something that can be stopped because no one is available to do it.

I have a couple of very short questions for the proponent for the purposes of the record and for information of those in the Chamber.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Please proceed, madam.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

If I may, Mr. Speaker?

So through you, I believe there is a limit to the number of days that a substitute without a bachelor's degree may serve.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker .

I don't have the section of statute opened before

cd/rgd
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

96
May 19, 2011

me, but I believe that is correct.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

Thank you.

I believe from what we discussed in the Education Committee it was 40 days, if that's approximately right.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

40 days is my recollection as well.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

Thank you.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, and finally one further short question. I believe that there is specified, at least in the OLR analysis, that there is a minimum set of requirements that people must have which are not a bachelor's degree, but either some other type of certification or a certain number of credits. And I just wanted to check that, Mr. Speaker.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Thank you.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, yes. The substitute must have at least 12 semester hours of credit in the subject or elementary grades to be taught, and two, the employing school board must attest that no properly certified teacher is available for the position.

So this is in essence showing, A, that the person does have appropriate background, B, that they don't have someone with certification who's available. I'd also like to add that in the event that the substitute needs to be their longer than 40 days, they are a long-term substitute. There are higher standards for such a substitute, which include a bachelor's.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143rd):

I thank the gentleman for his answers.

That's very useful and I do urge my colleagues and everyone in the Chamber to support the bill.

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Thank you very much, madam.

Representative Srinivasan of the 31st, you have the floor, sir.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31st):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Through you to the proponent of the bill, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Representative Fleischmann, please prepare yourself.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31st):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I think I heard you just previously say -- I just want to make sure I heard that right -- that an attempt would be made and in what form will that be documented? That a teacher with a bachelor's degree was not available for that particular position and hence, we went for the substitute teacher.

I did -- I do recall you just mentioning that, but I wasn't sure in what format. Is it a formal way

cd/rgd
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

99
May 19, 2011

or is it relatively informal?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

The school board must make a formal attestation to the State Department of Education that no certified teacher was available for the substitute teaching position.

And as I think my colleague is well aware, a certified teacher not only has a bachelor's degree, they have all sorts of additional expertise and often a master's degree as well.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Representative Srinivasan.

REP. SRINIVASAN (31st):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank Representative Fleischmann very much for his answer.

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Thank you, sir.

Will you remark further on the bill before us?

Will you remark further on the bill before us?

Representative Genga of the 10th District, you have the floor, sir.

REP. GENGA (10th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in support of the bill and want to talk about experiences in substitute teaching because I've done that. And this bill is narrow in that it has the requirements that a school system and the State Department of Education must prove that the person is capable, but this is for short-term substitution. This is not a long-term sub.

And people in the classroom, such as paraprofessionals that were mentioned here, because they've been in a classroom, they have that on-the-job experience and they have the wherewithal of the students and the curriculum. And we are talking about short-term where prepared curriculum is given and an ability to handle and make sure that the students in the classroom manage in an appropriate way and do not take advantage because they have somebody who they're not used to.

Long-term substitution is much different. You

most developed your own curriculum, you must continue that. And that is distinguished in this bill. And that's why I'm in support of this bill and ask the colleagues to support it.

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Thank you very much, sir.

Will you remark further on the bill before us? Will you remark further on the bill before us? If not, staff and guests please come to the well of the House. Members please take their seat. The machine will be opened.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll call. Members to the Chamber. The House will be voting by roll call. Members to the Chamber, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? Will the members please check the board to ensure that their vote has been properly cast. If all the members have voted the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally. The Clerk would please announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

Senate Bill 933 in concurrence with the Senate.

Total Number voting	144
Necessary for adoption	73
Those voting Yea	142
Those voting Nay	2
Those absent and not voting	7

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

The bill passes.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar 197.

THE CLERK:

On page 47, Calendar 197, Substitute for House Bill Number 6484, AN ACT CONCERNING THE AVAILABILITY OF ACCIDENT RECORDS OF THE STATE POLICE, favorable report of the Committee on Public Service.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

Representative Dargan.

REP. DARGAN (115th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

DEPUTY SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ:

The question is on acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill

S - 614

**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2011**

**VOL. 54
PART 3
689 - 1039**

mb/rgd/gbr
SENATE

64
April 27, 2011

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark?

Senator McLachlan.

SENATOR McLACHLAN:

Thank you, Madam President.

Through you, a question for the proponent of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, sir.

SENATOR McLACHLAN:

Thank you, Madam President.

Senator, I wonder if you could clarify for me the scientific research of nonhumans. Is this --

THE CHAIR:

Sorry. Excuse me, sir. Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

I just ask that this bill be passed temporarily.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection.

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Madam President, the next item I have recorded is on calendar page 7, Calendar Number 106, Senate Bill Number 933, AN ACT CONCERNING SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS,

favorable report of the Education Committee.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Thank you, Madam President. I move the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Acting on approval of the bill, will you remark?

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Yes. Thank you, Madam President. The bill that is before us was brought to the Education Committee's attention by several people many of -- several of our colleagues here at the Legislature, because of a problem that's existing, unfortunately, in some of our urban and rural school districts where they're seems to be a problem finding substitute teachers for a short-term basis.

The substitute teachers currently under law have to have a bachelor's degree and as we all know substitute teachers are not paid very well. Even in this economy, we all know that people need jobs, but the reality is not everyone wants to be in a classroom either. That's very hard work.

But it was clear to us on the Education Committee

mb/rgd/gbr
SENATE

66
April 27, 2011

that the change we recently made that substitute teachers have a bachelor's degree is a difficult benchmark for this particular job. And so what this bill does is that it allows the State Board of Education -- a local board of education to request from the State Board of Education authorization from the commissioner before they can employ a substitute teacher that does not have a bachelor's degree, but is otherwise deemed qualified by the local board of education to perform the duties and I urge its passage.

THE CHAIR:

Acting on approval of it, will you remark further?
Will you remark further?

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you very much, Madam President. Great to see you this afternoon.

THE CHAIR:

Same here, sir.

SENATOR KISSEL:

A couple questions, through you to the proponent of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, sir.

mb/rgd/gbr
SENATE

67
April 27, 2011

SENATOR KISSEL:

I just want to make sure I'm clear on the process. It was my understanding that the superintendent of schools of the community where this particular -- I guess we would call it a waiver -- would be applied from would then make application to the commissioner of education. Is that how it works? Because I thought I heard you saying that boards of education would have to act.

Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

Through you, Madam President, that's correct. Through the commissioner.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kissel.

SENATOR KISSEL:

Thank you. I rise in strong support and I want to commend Senator Stillman and the Education Committee for moving forward on this, our ranking member Senator Boucher. This has a lot of folks in my neck of the woods very happy and I'm really hoping this becomes law. Even with the larger community, such as Enfield that

mb/rgd/gbr
SENATE

68
April 27, 2011

I represent, there are some outstanding substitute teachers that have associates degrees that have served in that role for many, many years and with the new law they were just locked out of that process and it was very unfortunate.

And to have them back on board assuming that this waiver would not be unnecessarily withheld would get the superintendent of schools up in a town like Enfield a lot more latitude. Similarly in some of our smaller communities, it's just plain hard to find substitute teachers. Even in a difficult economy, having that threshold is very difficult to fill those slots. And we have requirements that the schoolchildren have got to be taught and so I really do commend the Education Committee, and its leadership, and Senator Stillman for shepherding this through. I think it makes a lot of sense. I think to have bachelor's degrees for all substitutes is a laudable goal, but if we have some outstanding folks out there with associates degrees or other competencies that could go in and substitute its good for all of us and it's good for the students in a strongly support this bill. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator. Will you remark?

Senator Slossberg.

SENATOR SLOSSBERG:

Thank you, Madam President. I also rise in support of this bill in front of us. And commend the Education Committee and Senator Stillman for her leadership on this. As you've heard, this was obviously something that the Legislature passed as a good idea. It was one of those things that we came up with and said this sounds like a good idea. And when it went in to affect it turned out to be a very bad idea. I know in my district this legislation, when it was passed initially, requiring this bachelor's degree, took 30 jobs away in my town from people who were very well-qualified and excellent teachers who had been in the school system.

And suddenly, they found themselves 30 days before the school year started without a job. It was incredibly difficult for them. There was an incredible hardship and even a number of them were on their way to earning their bachelor's degree and it really pulled the rug out from under them. So I am delighted to see that this provision is before us. I

mb/rgd/gbr
SENATE

70
April 27, 2011

hope this does become -- does pass. My guess is that it will, given support.

And again, I commend the Education Committee, Senator Stillman for recognizing that while the original bill, as passed, was with good intentions sometimes we do have the law of unintended consequences and then we go back and fix it.

So I thank Senator Stillman and leadership of the Education Committee for pass -- for moving this bill. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, Senator Slossberg. Will you remark further? Will you remark further?

Senator Stillman.

SENATOR STILLMAN:

If there isn't any objection, I'd like to ask that this be placed on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered.

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Madam President, the next item on the calendar on page 7, Calendar Number 115, Substitute for Senate Bill Number 18, AN ACT CONCERNING APPEALS OF HEALTH

mb/rgd/gbr
SENATE

112
April 27, 2011

Madam President, according to the Clerk's record on page 2, on the second consent calendar, Calendar Number 43, Senate Bill Number 851; on page 3, Calendar Number 46, Senate Bill -- Substitute for Senate Bill Number 849; on page 4, Calendar Number 65, Senate Bill Number 889; on page 7, Calendar Number 106, Senate Bill Number 933; on page 8, top of the page, Calendar 118, Senate Bill Number 885; on page 9, Calendar 131, Senate Bill Number 861; on page 10, Calendar Number 153; and also on page 10, Calendar Number 160, Substitute for Senate Bill Number 1109. SB 911

That completes the items placed on the second consent calendar according to my record.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir. We have one more --

THE CLERK:

Madam President, on the top page 11, Calendar Number 162, Substitute for Senate Bill Number 1076.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir.

Would you please call -- announce a roll call vote and the machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

An immediate roll call vote has been ordered in

mb/rgd/gbr
SENATE

113
April 27, 2011

the Senate on the second consent calendar. Will all Senators please return to the chamber.. An immediate roll call vote has been ordered in the Senate on the second consent calendar. Will all Senators please return to the chamber.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk, could you announce it one more time please?

THE CLERK:

The Senate is voting on the second consent calendar. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber. The Senate is voting on the second consent calendar. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.

THE CHAIR:

Everybody has voted. All members have voted. The machine will be locked. Will the Clerk please announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

Madam President, the result of the vote on the second consent under is:

Total Number voting	34
Necessary for adoption	18
Those voting Yea	34

mb/rgd/gbr
SENATE

114
April 27, 2011

Those voting Nay 0

Those absent and not voting 2

THE CHAIR:

The consent calendar is adopted.

Senator Looney, please.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President. For purposes of a clarification.

Madam President, on calendar page 11, Calendar 162, Senate Bill 1076 was not an item that I had announced for the consent calendar. I'm told that it may have been listed on the consent calendar, but it should not have been. So I just want to make sure that is deleted.

THE CHAIR:

Yes, sir, and it was not listed on the machine, sir. Thank you.

At this time, Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, the Clerk is now in possession of Senate Agenda Number 4.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.