

Legislative History for Connecticut Act

PA 17-172

HB7201

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Transcripts from the Joint Standing Committee Public
Hearing(s) and/or Senate and House of Representatives
Proceedings

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**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2017**

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SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

If all the members have voted, please check the board to ensure your vote's been properly cast. If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked. The Clerk will take a tally.

The Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill 7901.

Total Number Voting	147
Necessary for Passage	74
Those voting Yea	147
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	4

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The bill passes. (Gavel) Will the Clerk please call House Calendar 364?

CLERK:

Page 19, House Calendar 364, House Bill Number 7201, AN ACT APPLYING THE SHEFF DEFINITION OF REDUCED-ISOLATION SETTING TO ALL INTERDISTRICT MAGNET SCHOOLS IN THE STATE. Favorable report of the Joint Standing Committee on Education.

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DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY (110TH):

The question is on acceptance and passage. Would you explain the bills, please, sir?

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The measure before us would have gone and changed criteria used for interdistrict magnet schools in some parts of the state to match the criteria --

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY (110TH):

Excuse me, Representative Fleischmann, there's no amendment before us yet.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

I'm talking about the bill, sir.

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY (110TH):

Oh okay. No, you said amendment and it confused me. Thank you.

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REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Sorry.

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you for clarifying that.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

The measure that is now before us would have made changes to the criteria used to determine whether an interdistrict magnet school --

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY (110TH):

Excuse me again, Representative Fleischmann.

(Gavel) Ladies and gentleman, I can't hear Representative Fleischmann so if you'd please quiet down. Thank you. Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The bill that's now before us would make changes to criteria to determine whether an interdistrict magnet school is eligible for operating grants and would have gone and taken the criteria of the current Sheff stipulated agreement and applied them statewide.

However, it was pointed out to members of the Education Committee and others in this assembly that

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that approach did not make sense as the current stipulated agreement is coming to an end and therefore we couldn't be referencing its terms in statute.

Rather, we needed to develop new terms that could continue clearly beyond the current stipulated agreement. So in that spirit, Mr. Speaker, the clerk is in possession of an amendment, LCO 8400. I ask the clerk please call it and I be given permission to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY (110TH):

Clerk is in possession of LCO Number 8400 which will be designated House Amendment Schedule "A". The Clerk please call the amendment.

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule "A" LCO Number 8400 offered by Representative Fleischmann and Representative Lavielle et al.

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY (110TH):

Gentleman has asked leave of the chamber to summarize. Without objection, Representative Fleischmann.

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REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The amendment that is now before us would establish a new set of criteria for magnet schools reflective of the direction of the administration has made clear which is to go in which has concurrence from leadership of the Education Committee.

Fundamentally, it would establish requirement for minimum percentage of reduced isolation students that can be enrolled in an interdistrict magnet school program provided that minimum is less -- not less -- excuse me, than 20 percent of the total school enrollment.

It would also make sure that if there was a variance of -- no variances of more than 2 percent from that minimum percentage established and for the commissioner to accept such a variance, she or he would have to approve a plan designated to bring the member -- the number of reduced isolation students at such interdistrict magnet school program into compliance with the minimum percentage.

So in plain English, the commissioner would be

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making sure that any school that didn't actually hit the percentage had a plan to hit it. I move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY:

Question is on adoption. Will you remark further on House Amendment Schedule "A"? Representative Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of the amendment. As the good Chairman of Education said, this resolves an issue that was before us which was that the stipulated agreement was about to expire.

The -- this also gives us consistent standards for magnet schools across the state and it also does not make those standards any more difficult than they already are for any magnet school that we have now. So it's a good amendment. I support it. I urge others to do so as well. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY:

Thank you, Ma'am. Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

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Just a quick question through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY:

Proceed.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

Just the last section of the bill talks about a financial penalty if the magnet school fails to comply. Just wondering what type of penalty we're talking about in terms of dollars and cents?

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY:

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. While I can't provide an exact amount here today, what this section is intended to is incentivize districts to get to the standards set in this amendment.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY:

Representative Smith.

REP. SMITH (108TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank the Chairman for the answer. I appreciate the answer and the only thing that concerns me is it's just so open-

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ended. A financial penalty could be \$100 dollars, it could be \$100,000 dollars so I -- I understand how it's drafted, that's the way it is. It should have been tightened up with some dollar amount so we know what we're talking about. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY:

Thank you, sir. Representative Butler.

REP. BUTLER (72ND):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I have a couple questions for the proponent of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY:

Proceed, sir.

REP. BUTLER (72ND):

I'm not privy to being on the Education Committee, so I just want to ask a few questions to understand what's actually in the bill. Could the good gentleman tell me what would trigger the commissioner to take action in a given school system?

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Fleischmann.

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REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. If I understand my good colleague correctly and if he means by action, implementing the section that was just referenced by the previous questioner, that would only come into play if a district failed to put together a plan showing that they were coming into conformity with the standards set forth here in the amendment.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Butler.

REP. BUTLER (72ND):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I guess the question is about both of those particular provisions. The one that speaks to the 75 percent of the total school enrollment and I was just wondering if the good gentleman know what school systems off-hand may actually be impacted by this amendment?

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

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Through you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my good colleague for his question. I would refer him back to Section 1 of the bill which creates the new standard that's 80/20 as opposed to 75/25 with a 2 percent variance permissible. Under that standard, I believe virtually every magnet school in the State of Connecticut presently would be in conformity.

Now we don't know that the commissioner will necessarily pick 80/20 as the initial split. She could go with, you know, 80 -- sorry, 78/22 but the only direction she can move is in the direction that's easier than the current 75/25 split.

So in short, if one's looking around at the magnet schools in the State of Connecticut, this bill makes it easier for them to stay in conformity with guidelines issued by the Department. Easier, not harder.

Through you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Butler.

REP. BUTLER (72ND):

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Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And it's pretty hard to hear back here with all the chatter that's going on so excuse me for just asking a couple more probing questions but I couldn't hear half of what you said, to tell you the truth.

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY (110TH):

(Gavel) Much better. Thank you.

REP. BUTLER (72ND):

So I guess instead of having just general questions, I have a concern about the Waterbury school system and so any magnet school in Waterbury would have to be in adhered or follow these guidelines set forth in this section?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Through you, Mr. Speaker. Under current law, every magnet school in Waterbury currently has to be pursuing a plan that's in conformity with a 75/25 split -- 75 percent of the children being from, say, Waterbury, if it's a Waterbury host magnet and 25

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percent of the children being from sending districts.

Under the amendment that is now being considered, the commissioner would have discretion to move those numbers to 80/20. 80 percent of the kids being from Waterbury, 20 percent coming from outside sending districts. So in terms of my good colleague's concerns for his local magnet schools, this will make it easier for them to stay in conformity.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY (110TH):

Representative Butler.

REP. BUTLER (72ND):

Thank you. Thank you, Mr. -- I would like to thank the good gentleman from West Hartford for his answers and I will actually read a little further to get a better understanding.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY (110TH):

Thank you, sir. Would you remark further on House Amendment Schedule "A"? Would you remark

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further on House Amendment Schedule "A"? If not,
let me try your mind. All those in favor, signify
by saying "Aye".

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY (110TH):

Opposed, "Nay". The "ayes" have it. The
amendment is adopted. (Gavel) Will you remark
further on the bill as amended? Will you remark
further on the bill as amended? If not, staff and
guests, please come to the well of the house.
Members take your seats. The machine will be open.
(Ringing)

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll.
Members to the Chamber. The House of
Representatives is voting by roll. Members to the
Chamber.

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY (110TH):

Have all the members voted? Have all the
members voted? If all the members have voted, the

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machine will be locked. What? The machine is not locked yet, Representative Verrengia.

If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked. And the Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Bill 7201 as amended by House "A".

Total Number Voting	145
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Necessary for Passage	73
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Those voting Yea	145
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Those voting Nay	0
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Those absent and not voting	6
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DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY (110TH):

The bill as amended is passed. (Gavel)

Representative DiMassa, for what purpose do you rise?

REP. DIMASSA (116TH):

Mr. Speaker, the button's getting close tonight and I'd just like it to be noted in the journals I'm affirmative on the last vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE GODFREY (110TH):

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Those Voting Yea	136
Those Voting Nay	14
Those absent and not voting	1

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The bill as amended in concurrence with the
Senate is passed. [Gavel] Will the Clerk please
call House Calendar 364.

CLERK:

Calendar 364, House Bill 7201, AN ACT APPLYING
THE SHEFF DEFINITION OF REDUCED-ISOLATION SETTING TO
ALL INTERDISTRICT MAGNET SCHOOLS IN THE STATE.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move acceptance of
the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage
of the bill in concurrence with the Senate.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The question before the Chamber is on
acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report
and passage of the bill in concurrence with the .

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Senate. Representative Fleischmann, please proceed.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Clerk is in possession of Amendment, LCO 8975. I'd ask the Clerk to please call it and I be given permission to summarize.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Will the Clerk please call LCO No. 8975, which will be designated Senate Amendment Schedule A.

CLERK:

Senate A, LCO No. 8975, offered by Senator Duff, Senator Slossberg, et al.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Fleischmann.

REP. FLEISCHMANN (18TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The amendment before us moves the variance available to magnet schools from 2 percent to 1 percent, make sure that it's just a one-year solution and also has an allowance for a part-time magnet school that was so designated late in the year. I move adoption.

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SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Will you remark further on the amendment before us? Will you remark further on the amendment before us? If not, let me try your minds. All those in favor, please signify by saying, aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Those opposed, nay. I ayes have it. The amendment is adopted. Will you remark further on the bill as amended? If not, staff and guests to the well of the House. Members take your seats. The machine will be open.

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll.
Members to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is voting by roll, members to the Chamber. [Ringing]

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Have all the members voted? If all the members have voted, please check the board to ensure your

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vote has been properly cast. If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked. The Clerk will take a tally. The Clerk will announce the tally.

CLERK:

Senate Bill 7201, as Amended by Senate A and House A.

Total Number of Voting	150
Necessary for Passage	76
Those Voting Yea	150
Those Voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	1

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

The bill as amended is passed in concurrence.

[Gavel] Will the Clerk please call Calendar 518.

CLERK:

Calendar 518, Senate Bill 136, AN ACT
CONCERNING VEHICLE NUMBER PLATES FOR CERTAIN
VETERANS.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Representative Hennessy.

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The bill passes. [Gavel] Representative Albis
of the 99th.

REP. ALBIS (99TH):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that we
immediately transmit House Calendar 194 to the
Senate.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Without objection, so ordered. Representative
Currey of the 11th District, you have the floor,
sir.

REP. CURREY (11TH):

I rise for an announcement, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Say it again, Representative, I'm sorry.

REP. CURREY (11TH):

I rise for an announcement.

SPEAKER ARESIMOWICZ (30TH):

Please proceed.

REP. CURREY (11TH):

With just a couple of minutes to go, I just
want to make sure that we wish a good Happy Birthday

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Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, a number of items to mark go please.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed sir.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Thank you, Madam President. On Calendar Page 31, Calendar 573, House Bill 7201, I would like to mark go. On Calendar Page 34, Calendar 590, House Bill 7253, go. On Calendar Page 4, Calendar 148, Senate Bill 807, go. On Calendar Page 38, Calendar 608, House Bill 7278, go. On Calendar Page 28, Calendar 556, House Bill 7138, go. On Calendar Page 33, Calendar 585, House Bill 7174, go. And on Calendar Page 7, Calendar 236, Senate Bill 316, go. And I would ask all members of the chamber to please stay in their seats because votes will be coming quickly. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark further? Mr. Clerk, will you call the first bill?

CLERK:

On Page 31, Calendar 573, House Bill No. 7201, an ACT APPLYING THE SHEFF DEFINITION OF REDUCED-ISOLATION SETTING TO ALL INTERDISTRICT MAGNET SCHOOLS IN THE STATE.

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I'm sorry. Senator Slossberg.

SENATOR SLOSSBERG (14TH):

Yes, thank you Madam President. I move the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on acceptance and passage. Will you remark --

SENATOR SLOSSBERG (14TH):

--Yes, the clerk has in his possession LCO No. 8975. I ask that it please be called and I'd be granted leave to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

Please Mr. Clerk.

CLERK:

LCO No. 8975 Senate "A" offered by Senators Duff, Slossberg, et al.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Slossberg.

SENATOR SLOSSBERG (14TH):

Yes, thank you Madam President. This is a strike all amendment that addresses --

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THE CHAIR:

--Motion is on adoption--

SENATOR SLOSSBERG (14TH):

I move adoption.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark ma'am.

SENATOR SLOSSBERG (14TH):

Thank you, Madam President. This amendment before us is a strike-all amendment that addresses issues of racial isolation in our state and allows us to make payments to magnet schools.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further? Will you remark further?
Senator Boucher. Senator Boucher, please.

SENATOR BOUCHER (26TH):

Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, this is a very good amendment, support it and hope everyone will vote in favor. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you? Will you remark further? Will you
remark further? Senator Suzio.

SENATOR SUZIO (13TH):

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Thank you, Madam President. I have a question for the proponent of the bill if I may?

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed sir.

SENATOR SUZIO (13TH):

Yes, Madam President. My question pertains to whether this legislation that stands before us today does affect the state statute and legislation in 10-264 Subsection C, Subsection C. I would like to know if that is correct that it does not change that particular legislation. Through you Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Slossberg.

SENATOR SLOSSBERG (14TH):

Yes, thank you Madam President. No, it does not.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Suzio.

SENATOR SUZIO (13TH):

That makes my questions moot. Thank you very much.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you very much. Will you remark further on the bill? Will you remark further on the bill? If not

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-- I'm sorry on the amendment? I will try your minds, all those in favor please say "Aye".

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed? The amendment passes. Senator Slossberg.

SENATOR SLOSSBERG (14TH):

If there's no objection Madam President, I'd ask that this item be placed on our consent calendar?

THE CHAIR:

No, no you want to vote on it now ma'am and send it downstairs.

SENATOR SLOSSBERG (14TH):

Oh, I'm sorry Madam President. I ask for a roll call vote.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk, will you call for a roll call vote? The machine will be open.

CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.
Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

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Senators I ask you not to leave the chamber, we will be rolling through these bills as quickly as possible. After you vote, please do not leave the chamber. Senator Hwang? If all members have vote, all members have voted, the machine will be closed. Mr. Clerk will you call the tally?

CLERK:

House Bill 7201.

Total number voting	36
Necessary for Adoption	19
Those voting Yea	36
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	0

THE CHAIR:

Senator Duff.

SENATOR DUFF (25TH):

Do the next call.

THE CHAIR:

The machine is closed. Oh, I'm sorry. Please do the next one, Mr. Clerk?

CLERK:

Page 34, Calendar 590, Substitute for House Bill No. 7253, an ACT CONCERNING MINOR REVISIONS AND ADDITIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES.

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are conducting their work lawfully and bringing real value to the children and families of Connecticut to decide to stop doing work in our state and risk closure of the schools that they are serving.

Next, I would like to speak to Governor's Bill 786 and ACT CONCERNING EDUCATION MANDATE RELIEF TRANSPARENCY AND REGIONAL INCENTIVES. The governor's proposal is focused on providing districts with flexibility, streamlining services, easing funding mandates and starting discussions that will promote regional cooperation. It also brings the state three incorporated or endowed academies into alignment with respect to school accountability which we fully support. Currently the endowed academies send bills to the district they serve with no oversight and this proposal will give those districts a voice on the school governing board and allow for public hearings pertaining to the budget. Furthermore, Sections C, D and E of Section 12 parallel the recently passed Charter School Accountability Statue and will bring the endowed academies into alignment with transparency, budget and reporting requirements of other multi-town district, ultimately helping to better serve the students who attend them.

The next bill I would like to address is Raised Bill 7201, AN ACT APPLYING THE SHEFF DEFINITION OF REDUCED-ISOLATION SETTING TO ALL INTERDISTRICT MAGNET SCHOOLS IN THE STATE. The Department agrees with the goals of this bill but does not agree with the language as it stands currently. We support unifying the desegregation standard in the state in accordance with the SHEFF standard but to do not support linking it to the 2013 stipulation, an order which will expire in June. Negotiations are still pending at this time so it does not make sense to

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propose conforming to a SHEFF stipulation that likely may change in the coming months. We're also opposed to requiring schools established prior to 2005 to conform to this standard when they are currently only subject to the residency standard. It will take a substantial amount of time for those schools to attain a racial compliance standard. And having said that, we are aligned with the goals of this legislation and are very happy to collaborate with you in developing workable language.

I would like to quickly speak to Raised Bill 7202 An ACT CONCERNING THE STATUS OF AVIATION MAINTANCE PROGRAMS AND LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE PROGRAMS OFFERED AT TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOLS. The Department fully supports this proposal. We are working on language changes that we believe may closely meet, may more closely meet the federal legal standard Pell-awarding programs and will provide you with those changes as soon as they are completed.

Lastly, I would like to address Raised Bill 7200, AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE ON LIFE-THREATENING FOOD ALLERGIES IN SCHOOLS. While the Department recognizes the seriousness of certain food allergies and the importance of keeping our children safe when they are at school and on the bus we cannot support this proposal. First and foremost this would have a very adverse effect on the Culinary Program at the technical high schools. Culinary Arts is a trade that has accreditations through the American Culinary Federation and our current curriculum meets the requirements to allow students to graduate with a stackable credential as Junior Certified Culinarians or CJC. By altering the curriculum to meet the requirements of these proposals, Connecticut Technical High School System would jeopardize the accreditation as well as a

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REP. MILLER (145TH): Good afternoon and thank you for testifying. I have a question to ask you. Under current law who receives the reading survey results of the individual teachers? Do you know?

SUBRIA GORDON: If I am correct, it goes directly to the teacher and then the teacher just comments whether or not they give that to their supervisor.

REP. MILLER (245TH): Okay, so you're saying that the teacher takes the survey, and it is up to the teacher to determine whether they give it to the administrator or whomever? So it was my understanding that that legislation, part of that legislation was based on what professional development that the surveys were to be used for professional development. Do you have any insight on that at all?

SUBIRA GORDON: I think, I think that was before my time but I do think so, I am not 100 percent sure.

REP. MILLER (245TH): Okay, thank you.

SENATOR BOUCHER (26TH): Thank you very much. Any further questions? Yes, Representative Lavielle has a question for you.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD): Good afternoon Subira, thanks for your testimony and thank you for your support of the literacy legislation. There really isn't anything more important that we could be doing. I wanted to ask you a question about how House Bill 7201, applying the SHEFF standard. Really just, and I look forward to hearing from Dr. Rivera later but just to understand what the actual effect would be from applying the SHEFF standards. Can you elaborate on that a little bit because I don't feel I understand it totally.

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SUBIRA GORDON: I don't know if I'm the specific expert to elaborate on that much either.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD): I didn't mean to put you on the spot.

SUBIRA GORDON: But what I do understand that it helps with the racial imbalance that exists in some districts. SHEFF is held to specific standards and non SHEFF magnet districts are not held to those exact standards. So I think what we are looking at doing is kind of creating some balance, creating a bit of a balance with racial disparities that exist between the SHEFF magnet schools and non-SHEFF magnet schools, if I understand that correctly.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD): So, you're, is what you are sort of saying is that in non SHEFF magnet schools the standards are sort of arbitrary? They are not consistent or they're just different?

SUBIRA GORDON: They're different. I wouldn't say they are arbitrary, they're just different. And I think what we are trying to do is create some parody between goals.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD): Okay, well we will get, I really didn't mean to put you on the spot, I'm just trying to understand it myself. Thank you very much.

SUBIRA GORDON: Thank you.

SENATOR BOUCHER (26TH): I thank you Representative for the questions, yes, Representative Morris.

REP. MORRIS (140TH): Thank you Madam Chairwoman. Thank you for the opportunity to ask questions. Good afternoon Subira. Question, and I missed the initial part of your testimony and I also missed

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SUBIRA GORDON: Thank you.

SENATOR BOUCHER (26TH): Thank you very much Representative and any other, yes, we have another question from Representative McCarty.

REP. MCCARTY (38TH): Thank you Madam Chair and HB7201 welcome Subira today. I just wanted to comment that while I am pleased to see this bill in front of us. I can tell you that in my district we had a interdistrict magnet school which I was very proud of with partnership with New London and Waterford, granted it was pre-K through K but we really met the criteria of the Sheff tradition in the schools so as this goes forward I would also like to see us talk about parity in funding because what occurred in my district because there was such a grand disparity between the Sheff and out of the Sheff district that we had a situation in the town where the municipality was no longer going to contribute to the school and so I was worried that while we created this really exemplary district with the racial component that we now at a loss so I would hope as we go forward that we can take into consideration also how we fund the interdistrict magnet schools, if they're meeting the criterial established through the Sheff. It's just a comment.

SUBIRA GORDON: Okay.

SENATOR BOUCHER (26TH): Thank you very much Representative McCarty. Any other questions by Committee members? Thank you very much Ms. Gordon.

SUBIRA GORDON: Thank you.

SENATOR BOUCHER (26TH): Appreciate it, nice to see you here today.

SUBIRA GORDON: Good to see you too.

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people who can take on these rolls. There is a shortage and that is a concern for everyone because there are jobs out there and really good jobs, good stable jobs. So it is a conundrum and I hope that we'll be able to solve this. But I understand your point about qualifications not necessarily being the way to get...

PAUL ANGELLUCCI: I mean a wishful answer would be yes, if the state supports the system more, stop the budget cuts and so on to the system. We have had reductions year after year and, you know, all that plays out to the negative when you are trying to recruit people in. So.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD): Yea, I appreciate that very much, thank you for your testimony and for being patient.

PAUL ANGELLUCCI: Thank you.

SENATOR BOUCHER (26TH): Are there any other questions by Committee members? Seeing none, thank you very much again for being with us this this afternoon, it's appreciated.

PAUL ANGELLUCCI: Thank you.

SENATOR BOUCHER (26TH): Do we have Representative Soto and New London Superintendent Dr. Manny Rivera and I guess Kate McCorey also is with us? -- Good afternoon, welcome.

HB 7201

REP. SOTO (39TH): Good afternoon Senator and Ranking Member Lavielle, esteemed colleagues on the Education Committee. My name is Representative Chris Soto and I represent New London, Connecticut's

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Coast Guard City. I am here along with many colleagues to testify in support of Raised Bill 7201, AN ACT APPLYING THE SHEFF DEFINITION OF REDUCED-ISOLATION SETTING TO ALL INTERDISTRICT MAGNET SCHOOLS IN THE STATE. I am going to defer most of my time to the Superintendent who can speak through some of the details. I know there were some questions from members on the Committee about the bill but I just want to share one message and hopefully this won't take away from today and our testimony. It is about equity. You know, when we think back and study history as to why we went down the magnet school's path it was about leveling the playing field for students and that was about equity and so whether intentional or not the current magnet system has a double standard with respect to how we calculate student populations and so for one magnet that is within the Sheff region and then the other 99 schools throughout our state that are not within the Sheff region. And so you also heard testimony from Commissioner Wentzel who is in support of the idea as long as we can get workable language and so again moving forward just consider that we all have the same goal around student achievement but let's also have the same standards. I will turn it over to Superintendent Manny Rivera.

SUPERINTENDENT RIVERA: Thank you. You have my written testimony so I won't actually read that to you. I just thought I would make a few highs, and by the way, thank you very much for taking this time.

House Bill 7201, I think one important thing that I wanted to convey is that it does not represent additional funding. There is no negative financial impact. It simply enables, not only New London

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magnet schools, but magnet schools in New Haven, Waterbury, Bridgeport to access funding that has already been allocated. We all know that magnet schools really have two major goals and one of which, of course, is to improve student learning that is first and foremost but secondly also to reduce racial isolation. But we also have two standards and I also learned this morning that there may be three. There are some magnet schools that were established before 2005 for which there may not even be a racial balance criteria that they are obligated to meet. We are obligated to meet a different criteria so there are two standards then the Sheff schools in the Hartford region. And I will try to explain that in response to Representative Lavielle's question.

In the Sheff schools they are obligated to have a minority enrolment of no more than 75 percent that consists primarily only of African American and/or Hispanic students. In New London, Waterbury, New Haven our minority population includes all races. In other words we are obligated, it is not just African American and/or Hispanic but also Pacific Islanders, Asian and so on. We are obligated at 25% of our population must be White Caucasian only. Now last year, and I want to thank the Committee for doing this, you supported a Bill which gave us, it was for one year only, it actually expires in June. It gave us a three percent variance if you will for enrolling in meeting the standard. We are now in compliance with the standard but what is happening is even though there is ample demand for seats in New London Public Schools from more than 30 districts a pretty good percentage of those are students who are nonwhite by definition and it thereby limits us. So we are simply asking for the

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same standard, the standard that is equivalent to the Sheff schools as we move forward. I think eventually down the road we may well have to strengthen that or look at other ways and including socioeconomic circumstances.

MIRNA MARTINEZ: Good afternoon, my name is Mirna Martinez. I am on the New London Board of Education and I am also from the personal perspective of parents of two mixed race children and my own classification of my children has been something that has changed with times and it is an imperfect classification and, you know, that being said, I understand the reasons for creating districts that are reducing racial isolation. And for now, despite the imperfections of the, of our categories I recommend that our magnet district, that must abide by mandates to limit racial isolation, be held to the same standard. We need to see equity in the manner of rectifying the problem.

KATE MCCOY: Thank you, I am here mainly to answer questions. This is a lot of the work that I do in the district but also to. . .

SENATOR BOUCHER (26TH): Could you state your name for the record?

KATE MCCOY: Sorry, Kate McCoy. I am the Executive Director for Planning for New London. I think it is important that we recognize that what we are looking for is to create the level playing field for us to work together to develop a standard that is more appropriate going into the future, that this is not ideal and that we do think there should be additional work that we work together with the

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district, with all of the magnet schools as well as our partners at the state.

SENATOR BOUCHER (26TH): Thank you very much. Do we have questions by members of the Committee. Yes, we do from Representative Miller.

REP. MILLER (145TH): Thank you Madam Chair. Superintendent, thank you all for being here today to testify. I have a question. You made a comment that you don't have access to the money that you're allocated? Did I hear you correctly?

SUP. RIVERA: If we fail to meet the certain standard, the 25 percent standard of all white then we would not, fortunately this year, we have a three percent variance that was passed last year by the legislature. So in one particular school for example, at our Arts Middle School, which has about 22 percent. We were able to meet the standard and get the magnet funds that have been budgeted, access to those funds.

REP. MILLER (145TH): Okay. So how many different languages are spoken in your school district?

SUP. RIVERIA: There are at least 26 and I believe there is more than that but that was when I last asked in August what they were.

REP. MILLER (145TH): Thank you.

SENATOR BOUCHER (26TH): Thank you very much for your questions. Are there any other questions by the Committee members? Yes, Representative Gail Lavielle.

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REP. LAVIELLE (143RD): Welcome back Dr. Rivera and everyone from New London. This is, it's almost, it's kind of disorienting to actually sort out how this would play out in any given situation because you have to have at least this much, but less than this much of another group, it's confusing for me as I try to sort it out. It must be for you. If I understand correctly from what Ms. Martinez said, there are entire, I shouldn't say entire groups of, but there are certainly students who don't fall into either one of these categories, right? And so it is even, it is difficult to know how they would be accounted for in these required percentages.

MIRNA MARTINEZ: Will it is a matter of how a parent chooses to identify their children. But we were having an interesting conversation this morning, which I think falls into this same category of adding to the difficulty, the complexity of how to qualify for those numbers and Kate do you want to explain about when the lottery process goes, that conversation that we were having?

KATE MCCOY: As we enroll, we have about 41 different areas that apply to our lottery. We recruit, right now we have 38 towns, however, all we know is the gender or the child and the zip code the child comes from. So it is a completely blind lottery process. So we don't actually know our calculations other than our out of district calculation until after full registration. So it's a bit of a waiting game to know close how we are or not close we are to compliance in our area.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD): And then when you are not in compliance then it's a surprise if funding falls away?

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KATE MCCOY: Right. We do have, under the Commissioner, we have the right for a waiver, however, if you use that waiver once, you can only use it in one area, either out of district compliance or racial isolation compliance. And once you've exhausted that waiver, you may not reapply for it. And so that is some of the work that we did last year with to help the one school that had used its one waiver.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD): And so the variance that Dr. Rivera referred to was the waiver for the particular school?

KATE MC COY: Last year our Nathan Hale School did not have a rollout plan when it opened and so it was coming back from some numbers. We had used the waiver once and we came through last year with requesting a special act to give us a 22 percent threshold which we exceeded at that particular school but we were able to apply that special act to our Arts Middle Schools which opened with a 23 percent students identified as White.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD): And when you, were you to have the Sheff standard, okay, you're still on blind lottery, right and so what would happen if, this is absolutely mind boggling, the whole thing, if you were not to meet the Sheff criteria after the lottery would you be exposed to the same situation or would you be more likely just to meet that by virtue of your compensation of your district?

HB 1203 KATE MCCOY: By virtue of the composition of our district. In southeastern Connecticut in general we are, if I run my numbers right now, all of my

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schools are well within the Sheff compliance zone. So that is, that's mainly why we are taking this approach was to explain that, that is the demographics of our area that would help reduce racial isolation. I do think, and I stand by that, I think we need a long-term plan to shift this. As you said there are groups of students who are not identified.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD): That is correct.

KATE MCCOY: If a student is two or more races they are not reducing racial isolation or increasing racial isolation, they are just in the other category. And so I think there needs to be a much deeper conversation that looks at the entire role of what are we trying to do and what does it mean to reduce racial isolation and how are we defining that as a state. This Act puts us all into one place to do that co-construction together. It is not Sheff and non-Sheff, its Connecticut Magnet Schools have this standard. And together with our partners here and at FDE we can co-construct. What does that really mean, who are we as a state and how are we defining racial isolation for our schools.

REP. LAVIELLE (143RD): Thank you. I think it's pretty clear that it needs to be intentional and goal oriented and for you to be exactly clear on what you are driving at in terms of achieving racial imbalance which is very important. And I would think that the current circumstances sound very difficult to manage, that is probably the understatement of the year. Thank you very much.

KATE MCCOY: Thank you.

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SENATOR BOUCHER (26TH): Thank you Representative and if I could further this conversation just slightly, on the same, you mentioned that you're, you have a blind lottery, race is not identified, would it be helpful if it were. Would that be something that you would embrace or suggest.

KATE MCCOY: I'm not sure that is necessarily the direction to go. I think what we need to look at in more detail is creating tools for compliance that do include other indicators like socioeconomic status. I think we haven't done the depth of a look as to what it means to create a school that is racially balanced or no longer racially isolated. What is the role of race in that and as a secondary what is the role of socioeconomic status? I think that direction would be more beneficial than looking at a lottery that is no longer race blind.

SENATOR BOUCHER (26TH): ... with our microphones here. But I think what you just stated is a very important statement and was very helpful I think to the conversation as we evolve with this. It is not as simple as it used to be particularly with the very changing variety of individuals coming from so many different countries, speaking a different language and maybe language might be one of the indicators as well. If you are coming from a country with a different language that might also play into some of our calculations as well. Thank you all very much for being here and we enjoy, oops we have one more question from Representative Morris, if you would be patient enough to entertain further discussion. Thank you.

REP. MORRIS (140TH): Thank you Madam Chair and welcome Dr. Rivera. Listening to your testimony

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about the bill you are supporting makes me needs to ask a question about another bill that is on the agenda today. I don't know if you were here when we were asking about it and it was Raised Bill 7203, AN ACT CONCERNING A REVIEW OF THE IMPACT OF THE RACIAL IMBALANCE LAW ON SCHOOL DISTRICTS. Given the later part of the conversation I just heard where I like you thinking, your comments. You were actually talking about the difference between race and that being one of the indicators but also socioeconomic isolation. Would you be in support of that review, particularly since you, you know, since you're from my previous district in Norwalk and you've been in many urban districts. You are a familiar urban district superintendent so you've seen the kind of variances that happen, whether it's, you know, economics that's impacting education or race. Do you think that we are at a point in this state where we need to actually take a look at this as a priority along with our discussions that we're having about charter schools, magnet schools, CCJEF decision because the intent of this review, because there has not been a review, I don't know when there ever last was a review, would actually be important enough to give us the kind of data and information that I think your staff was looking for that could help us make sound decisions.

SUP. RIVERA: Sure, I didn't read the exact bill as proposed but it absolutely makes sense. I mean just as the Senator mentioned, the changing demographics in our communities, even those that are adjacent to your more urban centers if you will, the role of economics, the disparity in income levels that exist, even within I think about the Norwalk area or even the New London area from community to the next, quite significant and I would say that it is much

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more complex and this would be the absolute right and smart time to, for that review to take place.

REP. MORRIS (140TH): Thank you for that cause I wish I were more familiar with the New London District than I am because I mean I know that you have gone to model now, you've got all magnets and because of the large percentage of minority students that, what is your actual demographics for New London?

SUP RIVERA: It's about 78 percent African America and Latino and then 25-30 percent, do you know the exact numbers on the other races?

REP. MORRIS (140TH): Maybe the better question, what percent is white in New London?

KATE MCCOY: I do have the statistics on my phone and I can email them to you. It is roughly in the 20 percent level.

REP. MORRIS (140TH): And that is why you've got such a challenge. Okay. I need to kind of understand that and if you can help me a little bit more with New London, is it similar to Norwalk or even a Stamford in terms of where the more affluent housing may be more segregated from the less affluent housing?

SUP. RIVERA: It probably represents a much smaller faction of the community and there mainly, I would have to say families whose children do not attend public schools.

REP. MORRIS (140TH): Yep, yep, yep. Prior to going to this whole magnet, was New London, would someone say that the schools that were closer to those more

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affluent areas have the smaller percentage and actually grades and academics and everything did better, even though they did a large proportion send theirs to private schools?

SUP. RIVERA: Yes.

REP. MORRIS (140TH): Yes.

KATE MCCOY: Yes. As part of transitioning to the all magnet district that you know us as now, we did actually have a move to an intra-district magnet prior to that at our K-5 buildings. So currently one of the ways that although not all of our schools are inter-district right now, all of our elementary school children enter their schools through a lottery and that has helped keep out any sort of discrepancies like you said for what is the racial balance inside a district. We have not dealt with that, however, prior to our tenure all of us, there was a need for that.

REP. MORRIS (140TH): Commend you on your move to go to all magnet and whatever you can do to support fantastic. Thank you for your testimony today.

SENATOR BOUCHER (26TH): Seeing no other questions, by the Committee members, we thank you for being here. You have been a strong presence in the session which we appreciate and we enjoyed listening to your good success that you are having obviously good leadership really matters but some of the programs that you have, have really benefited and thank you Mr. Superintendent for not only the current job you are doing but for previous service that you've given our state. Thank you. Do we have



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VICE CHAIR
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 EXECUTIVE & LEGISLATIVE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE
 ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
 HOUSING COMMITTEE

Education Committee
 Monday, 6, 2017
Public Hearing
 11:00 AM in LOB Hearing Room 1E

Testimony in Support of

House Bill No. 7201 AN ACT APPLYING THE SHEFF DEFINITION OF REDUCED-ISOLATION SETTING TO ALL INTERDISTRICT MAGNET SCHOOLS IN THE STATE.

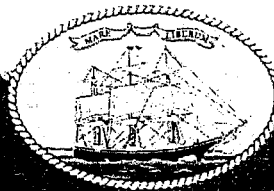
Good Morning Co-Chairs Fleischmann, Slossberg, Boucher, Ranking Member Lavielle, and esteemed Members of the Education Committee.

My name is Representative Chris Soto and I represent Connecticut's Coast Guard City - New London. I am here, along with many colleagues, to testify in strong support of HB 7201 An Act Applying The Sheff Definition Of Reduced-Isolation Setting To All Interdistrict Magnet Schools In The State.

I am going to defer my time to our District team but I really want to share one message as a takeaway, and that message is equity.

When we think back and study history as to why we started down the magnet path, it was all about leveling the playing field for students... it was about equity. And whether intentional or not, the current magnet system has a double standard with respect to how we calculate student populations - One for magnet schools within the Sheff region, and one for the 90 magnet schools around our state that are outside that region. So as you listen to today's testimony from my colleagues, please consider that if we all have the same goal, which is to increase students' achievement, let's also have one standard.

Thank you for your time.



NEW LONDON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Testimony in support of: **H.B. No. 7201 (RAISED) EDUCATION. 'AN ACT APPLYING THE SHEFF DEFINITION OF REDUCED-ISOLATION SETTING TO ALL INTERDISTRICT MAGNET SCHOOLS IN THE STATE'**, to apply the reduced-isolation setting standards of the 2013 stipulation and order for Milo Sheff, et al. v. William A. O'Neill, et al., as extended, to all interdistrict magnet schools in the state.

Submitted by: Kate McCoy, Executive Director Strategic Planning & Magnet School Development,
New London Public Schools

The intent of this bill is to use one measure for calculating racial isolation across Connecticut and our approximately 90 magnet schools. Currently, the calculation used in the Sheff region is not used in the Non-Sheff region. Applying one standard across the state is needed to create equity in access to our magnet grants.

Magnet schools in and out of the Sheff region share the same goals: increasing student achievement and decreasing racial isolation.

We are all held to the same standards of accountability for academic measures, yet, we have this discrepancy in one key measure: calculation of racial isolation.

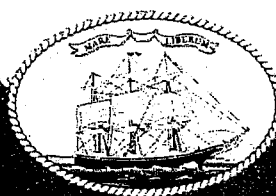
We need to bring this one standard in line across the state.

Supporting this bill is supporting the establishment of one standard; it is not agreeing with the standard.

I welcome questions and further discussion about this topic.

Thank you.





NEW LONDON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Testimony in support of: **H.B. No. 7201 (RAISED) EDUCATION. 'AN ACT APPLYING THE SHEFF DEFINITION OF REDUCED-ISOLATION SETTING TO ALL INTERDISTRICT MAGNET SCHOOLS IN THE STATE'**, to apply the reduced-isolation setting standards of the 2013 stipulation and order for Milo Sheff, et al. v. William A. O'Neill, et al., as extended, to all interdistrict magnet schools in the state.

Submitted by: Dr. Manuel Rivera, Superintendent, New London Public Schools

I am here this morning to speak in support of HB 7201, and ask that you support this bill.

This is not a bill that seeks additional state funding, nor would it have a financial impact. It is a bill that would eliminate a double standard that currently exists, in determining eligibility for those magnet funds that have already been budgeted.

The opportunity to provide high demand, quality schools and programs necessary to significantly improve student achievement and at the same time, reduce racial isolation in the State of Connecticut, is made possible by the state's financial commitment of magnet funding.

In order to access this funding source, necessary to operate quality magnet schools, we must strictly adhere to the laws and requirements established and imposed for enrollment, including racial balance, as one criteria.

There are two standards in the state of Connecticut, Sheff and Non-Sheff, despite that fact that all magnet schools throughout the state share the same goals: increased student achievement and decreased racial isolation.

Sheff magnet schools meet the racial enrollment standard when 75% or less of their enrollment is comprised of African American and Hispanic students, while all other magnet schools in the state must meet a different standard, and that is that 25% of their total enrollment must be students who identify as only white.

Schools in communities with high concentrations of African American and Hispanic/Latino students, such as Bridgeport, New Haven, and New London, must not only meet enrollment expectations that require a minimum of 25% of regional or Out-Of-District students, they must also meet a racial balance criteria that is different than the magnet schools in Hartford region (aka the Sheff Region). Given the increasingly diverse demographics of communities throughout the state, and especially those adjacent to Bridgeport, Waterbury, New Haven, and New London, this different standard represents a higher bar to achieve and threatens our ability to access the magnet funds that are so essential to meeting the demand of families in our region, a racially and ethnically diverse region.

The different measures for districts in and out of the Sheff region is not equitable and we are asking that there be one standard.

Thank You.





STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Connecticut General Assembly
Education Committee
Testimony of Commissioner Dianna R. Wentzell
March 6, 2017

Good morning Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann, Senator Boucher, Representative Lavielle and members of the Education Committee. I am Dianna Wentzell, Commissioner of the Department of Education, and I am pleased to have an opportunity to testify before you today regarding a series of important education-related proposals.

Raised Bill 7205, An Act Concerning Early Literacy

We support this proposal which would codify in statute work that is largely already being done by the Department in the area of early literacy. Having said that, we have partnered with outside stakeholders in the field as well as vendors to support these early literacy initiatives, which could be compromised if funding is cut for projects such as READ-Conn or CK3LI. We would also caution that the professional development modules required for Tier one universal supports will necessitate additional funds to implement.

Raised Bill 950, An Act Concerning The Streamlining Of The Hiring Process For Manufacturing Teachers In The Technical High School System

We fully support this proposal and would be happy to create a guidance document to clearly outline the statutory and regulatory requirements for individuals interested in working in the Connecticut Technical High School System.

Raised Bill 7206, An Act Concerning Charter Management Organizations

In 2015, the General Assembly passed significant new laws for Charter Management Organizations (CMOs). These include robust protections for ensuring charter school independence from CMOs, a new requirement for State Board of Education approval of CMO-Charter school relationships, a mandate that all CMOs must be non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations, and strong transparency requirements. These laws are in their infancy and it would be premature to make some of the principal changes outlined in this bill. Several such changes would dramatically alter the status of CMOs beyond the existing strong requirements. Also, passage of these provisions could have the effect of causing CMOs that are conducting their work lawfully and bringing real value to children and families of Connecticut, to decide to stop doing work in our state, thus risking closure of the schools they are serving.

Governor's Bill 786, An Act Concerning Education Mandate Relief Transparency And Regional Incentives

The Governor's proposal is focused on providing districts with flexibility, streamlining services, easing unfunded mandates, and starting discussions that will promote more regional cooperation. It also brings the state's three incorporated or endowed academies in line with respect to school accountability, which we fully support. Currently the endowed academies send bills to the districts

they serve with no oversight, this proposal would give those districts a voice on the school governing boards and allow for public hearings pertaining to their budgets. Furthermore, sections (c), (d) and (e) of Section 12 parallel the recently passed charter school accountability statutes, and will bring the endowed academies into alignment with the transparency, budget and reporting requirements of other multi-town districts, ultimately helping to better serve the students who attend them.

Raised Bill 7207, An Act Making Revisions To The Student Data Privacy Act Of 2016

We fully support the deferment of the effective date to July 1, 2018 to allow for a more thoughtful implementation of the required provisions of the 2016 law. This will greatly ease the burden currently being felt by districts.

Raised Bill 951, An Act Concerning The Testing Of Public School Water Supplies

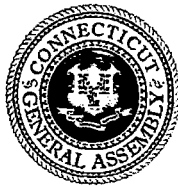
The Department is opposed to this proposal for several reasons. This should not be a local and regional board of education function. Drinking water is regulated by the Department of Public Health (DPH) in accordance with the federal Safe Drinking Water Act. DPH currently has direct responsibility for monitoring the approximately 170 schools in the state whose water source is their own domestic well. The remainder of schools operate under their municipal water supply system and the municipality is required to conduct periodic sampling of the water quality. Furthermore, allowing districts to request reimbursement from the Department for the costs of these tests, is not feasible in the current budget climate.

Raised Bill 7201, An Act Applying The Sheff Definition Of Reduced-Isolation Setting To All Interdistrict Magnet Schools In The State

The Department agrees with the goals of this bill in theory, but does not agree with the language as it stands. We support unifying the desegregation standard for the state in accordance with the Sheff standard, but do not support linking it to the 2013 stipulation, an order which will expire in June. Negotiations are still pending at this time, so it does not make sense to propose conforming to the Sheff stipulation which may change in the coming months. We are also opposed to requiring schools established prior to 2005 to conform to this standard when they are currently only subject to the residency standard. It will take a substantial amount of time for those schools to attain a racial compliance standard. Having said that, we are aligned with the goals of this legislation and are happy to collaborate with you to develop workable language.

Raised Bill 953, An Act Implementing The Recommendations Of The Task Force On Professional Development And In-Service Training Requirements For Educators

The Department participated in the work of this task force and supports its recommendations to streamline and modify the professional development requirements for PK-12 teachers across the state. Currently there are 106 hours (or 13 days) of required professional development for teachers outlined in statute, which conflicts significantly with the 18 hours required by C.G.S. 10-148a(a). As stated in the task force report, over the past ten years, there has been a significant increase in statutorily mandated trainings for public school educators, which is causing a loss of critical instructional time with students. Meeting these mandates is also untenable for school districts in the face of significant cuts to fiscal and personnel resources.



Connecticut General Assembly's Commission on Equity & Opportunity
15-20 Trinity Street, Hartford, Connecticut

**Testimony from Subira Gordon, Executive Director of the Commission on Equity & Opportunity ~
Monday, March 6, 2017 ~ LOB Room 1E – 11:00 AM**

In support of Raised H.B. No. 7205 "An Act Concerning Early Literacy" and Raised H.B. No. 7201 "An Act Applying the Sheff Definition or Reduced-Isolation Setting to All Interdistrict Magnet Schools in the State"

Good morning Senators Slossberg, Boucher, and Rep. Fleischmann and all honorable members of the *Education Committee* of the Connecticut General Assembly (CGA). My name is Subira Gordon, Executive Director of the CGA's Commission on Equity and Opportunity (CEO). I am here today to speak in support of Raised H.B. No. 7205 "An Act Concerning Early Literacy" and Raised H.B. No. 7201 "An Act Applying the Sheff Definition or Reduced-Isolation Setting to All Interdistrict Magnet Schools in the State"

For the record, and for those that may be watching this proceedings online or via CTN in Connecticut, the mission of the CEO is to inform and engage all policy makers about constituent needs for the African American, Asian American, Pacific Islanders, and Latino and Puerto Rican populations in Connecticut. The General Assembly created it exactly for this purpose, which better ensures all lawmakers have all perspectives analyzed before they vote on legislation here in Hartford. We are a nonpartisan agency with a data driven, cross-cultural approach to policy innovation and our primary focus – again – is to recommend legislation that aims at eliminating disparities by creating opportunities, building connections and promoting social change.

The intent of HB 7205 is to allow that the results of the reading instruction survey currently in statute to be distributed to teachers as well as supervisors for the purpose of informing such teacher's professional development in reading instruction. In years' past this information was just provided to teachers and the current legislation would just expand such information directly to teachers as well as their supervisors. The bill would also establish a reading readiness program that provides tiered supports in early literacy to schools and school districts.

We are also extending our support behind H.B. No. 7201 which aims at the utilization of one measure for calculating racial isolation across Connecticut schools. This is not to say that more funding should be provided to non-Sheff Magnet schools rather it would eliminate a double standard in determining eligibility for which Magnet funds have already been budgeted across our state. School districts such as New London, with a high concentration of minority students, must not only meet enrollment numbers but they must also meet a racial balance criteria that is different than the magnet schools in the Hartford region – A difference, which according to New London officials is unachievable and potentially a threat to their ability to access the magnet funds that are so essential to meeting the demands of their region. You will hear directly from Dr. Manuel J. Rivera, New London Public Schools Superintendent about this topic today and I am sure he will be able to respond a number of questions you may have regarding this topic.

Thank you for your attention to these matters and I urge passage accordingly.