

Testimony of

Katherine Butler

Glastonbury Educator

Before the

Education Committee

March 1, 2023

Good afternoon, Senator McCrory, Representative Currey, Senator Berthel, Representative McCarty, and members of the Education Committee.

I testify today in support of the caps on class sizes proposed in Senate Bill 1093, which would take an important step in ensuring that classrooms are places where students can learn, and educators can teach.

It is a glaring error to group grades 3-8 together regarding class size. This indicates a lack of knowledge of how schools operate in elementary school versus middle school. Starting in grade 6 or 7, depending on the town, students are grouped in classes based on assessment scores. The classes are mainly homogeneous. Additionally, special education children are often not in the class as the level of content is not appropriate. Also, teachers in grades 6-8 teach one content area. This means they teach and differentiate the same 1 or 2 lessons for an entire week. Finally, they are not required to collect binders full of data on students with behavioral challenges or students who may need to be identified as needing additional support outside of the classroom. Contrast this with elementary school where teachers are responsible for 5 content areas(4-5 different lessons every day), each differentiated for the very wide range of abilities that are all together in the classroom. For example, when a teacher looks at a 5th grade writing lesson he or she must also plan how to instruct the students whose skills may be at a 2nd to 4th grade level, as well as modify the content for the children with special needs. Also, elementary teachers must collect and report extensive data, unrelated to grading, to administrators on students with IEP's, extreme behaviors(which has greatly increased in Glastonbury), or students who need to be identified as needing extra help. You cannot cover 23 students. It is simply too many. A third grade teacher shared that she knew there were 3 children in her room with learning or behavioral needs that would qualify for additional support. This means less time teaching and more time collecting and preparing data. So she chose to bring up one student to administrators. There is simply no way a teacher can cover all

23 students. Some will always be left behind. Third to fifth grade classes should be maxed out at 20 students.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

