

Testimony of

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Before the

Labor and Public Employees Committee

Re:

SB 423: AN ACT IMPROVING INDOOR AIR QUALITY IN PUBLIC SCHOOL CLASSROOMS.

March 15, 2022

Good morning, Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, Senator Sampson, Representative Arora, and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee.

I testify today in support of SB 423 and the establishment of school temperature and humidity limits and bonding for remediation and installation of modern HVAC systems. This bill would help reverse the impact of poor air quality in our schools that many don't see, but teachers and students experience every day.

I have been a CT teacher for the last 20 years. Before that, I was a student in CT from 5 years old through 18. I have been in CT schools for a total of 39 years and have NEVER once been in an air conditioned classroom!

It seems absurd that in 39 years, we have not made any progress in adding AC to every classroom in our schools. My current school was built from the ground up in 2010 and we STILL DO NOT HAVE AC IN OUR CLASSROOMS!!! Our building has AC in the office, cafeteria, SPED classrooms, and the hallways. The real slap in the face is that our community bathrooms have AC, BUT OUR CLASSROOMS DO NOT!!!

I am lucky that our classrooms are all on the main floor. In some schools in my town, there are 3 floors. The top floor exceeds 90 degrees INSIDE on hot/humid days!! My classroom on the main floor has been in excess of 80 + degrees on hot days. No one can teach in those elements and students can not learn. Have you ever been in a classroom at 2:30 in the afternoon on a 90 degree day?! Kids and teachers alike feel sick in those conditions and it needs to be fixed!!

There is no reason that in 2022, with all the funds we have received for better air quality in our schools that we are all still suffering, sometimes as early as April through June. There are laws against leaving kids and pets in hot cars...why is there no law on how hot we can be within a classroom setting?

I have heard that it is a law that pre-school settings have AC...I teach kindergarten. My kids leave pre-school in June and start in my classroom at the end of August. Somehow, within

those 2 months, it is okay for kids that are 2 months older than when they were in pre-school to no longer have AC???

I have kids with asthma, coughs, congestion, allergies, and other health impairments...the fact that we are sweltering all day without AC increases these issues. 39 years and no AC...haven't we (I) waited long enough?! PUT AC IN EVERY CLASSROOM...listen to teachers. After everything we have been through in the last 2 years, TEACHERS VOICES NEED TO BE HEARD!

Thank you for addressing this critical issues impacting our students, our educators, and our school communities.