

Testimony of

Tara Karlson

Stamford Educator

Before the

Labor and Public Employees Committee

Re:

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

March 15, 2022

Hello respected legislators, colleagues and peers. I'd like you to listen to my story and consider the impacts of a poorly insulated classroom.

My classroom has wildly variable conditions. Currently, the heat is on. There is no thermostat to control the temperature. The temperature will increase throughout the day in early and late winter, but stabilize to about 77 degrees F when the outdoor air temperature is below freezing. In late winter and early spring, the air temperature can reach over 80. Once the heat is turned off, the air temperature generally matches that of the outside air. Indeed, we have come into class to a 40 degree F room and a 110 degree F room. On those days, we must relocate. The room is not safe.

The humidity, once the heat is on, varies between 12 and 17 percent. With personally purchased and maintained humidifiers and five large fish tanks, I can sometimes keep humidity around 15 percent. Once the heat is turned off, the humidity levels change. The humidity increases rapidly and tends to be between 60 and 75 percent. I have even come into the classroom to a condensation flood. The walls were dripping and there was standing water on all surfaces, including desks and chairs. I will happily share photos of that incident and photos of the temperature and humidity meter I keep in my classroom.

You may also access the daily data from a few years ago in the school climate program. I entered the temperature and humidity twice daily for about one year. Please consider the impacts this has on student learning. Please know that my classroom is often so dangerously hot that we must have class outside or find other available classrooms. This should not continue. However, I know that correction may not come. I have been in the same classroom for 15 years, and nothing is changed yet. Please help bring that change.

Thank you.