

Testimony of

Melissa Walston

Haddam-Killingworth 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.

I teach science, so the cap is recommended by the NSTA to be a maximum of 24, I can clearly state that 24 is only appropriate if you do not have students with IEP's or 504's, since the addition of students that need more 1:1 attention makes it difficult to properly teach all students. I would recommend additional a limit only having a certain percent of identified students to a class of 24, or if a higher percentage of identified students are in the class then the class size needs to be other or the class needs to be co-taught with a special education teacher. I have a science class (9th grade) with only 19 students, but I cannot reach or meet all of the needs, I have a para that is a 1:1, but then I also have 60% of the class as identified, so do the math, how do I reach all students, I have one that needs to orally respond answers to me another that needs things read to them, another that needs redirection, etc (you get the point). Do students and teacher justice, it is NOT enough to just cap the size of class without considering the population of students within the class, you need to cap class based on identified students or require (mandate) additional paras in the class if there is over a certain percentage of identified students. Please teachers are overwhelmed and kids are being left behind. Understand the full picture!

Thank you,

Melissa Walston

