



Testimony on House Bills 6074, 6077, and 5841

Submitted by Isabel Blank, External Affairs Manager

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Good afternoon Senator Bradley, Representative McGee, Representative Rochelle, Senator McCrory, and distinguished members of the Housing Committee. My name is Isabel Blank. I am Manager, External Affairs at the Yankee Institute for Public Policy, and I am writing to testify on **House Bills 6074, 6077, and 5841**.

First, I thank you for understanding that it is in some families' best interest to send their children to schools outside of their home district. Family and parental choice—as described in these bills—creates the opportunity for families to provide a quality education that matches the needs of their children. Whether it be for extra help with learning disabilities, to join a school with certain academic focuses or resources, or a school with longer academic days, it is clear that parents are best equipped to choose which school meets their family's needs. We are excited about and thankful for the efforts you have already made to increase school choice opportunities for our children and families, and we look forward to further beneficial legislation. However, although these bills were certainly well-intended, there are much more effective ways to help our families.

A child's zip code should not determine the quality of education they receive, and often times it cannot. A parent with three children, all with different needs, may send two children to their neighborhood school and one to a charter, or all three to different schools. This family can't live in three different towns, nor should they feel the need to leave their home.

School choice does not mean we abandon our cities. Moving families out of cities, like these bills suggest, is no way to strengthen them or hold them accountable for improving schools.

There are many better ways than these bills to improve families' lives and ensure access to school choice options. Providing more transportation possibilities, incentivizing charter school growth in lower income areas, and increasing transparency around school choice options for families are just a few. We want our school choice families, along with all the families in our state, to be free to learn and free to succeed. Let's allow our cities and families to strengthen each other by making school choice more accessible and available, not by incentivizing city flight.

The Yankee Institute refuses to abandon our cities, and we hope you will choose to do the same.

For these reasons, we oppose these bills.