

I am out of state and cannot testify Wednesday (today). In reviewing S.87, however, we do have a concern with the bill. Specifically and consistent with how we testified prior to the passage of Act 157 (2009-10), S.87 we oppose the way in which the bill focuses attention, exclusively, on teachers.

Parents don't care who might abuse their child, and S.87 ignores the fact that current law, Act 157/21 VSA § 306 & 307, already protects children from any bad actor regardless of whether the adult is an educator, or a camp counselor, priest, etc. S.87's singular focus on teachers is unwarranted and should be amended in a manner consistent with Act 157's broadly written language to protect all Vermont children from any bad acting adult.

Vermont-NEA opposes section 3(c) of S.87 as currently drafted because it unfairly singles out teachers and doesn't protect children from other adults who abuse children. Instead, we believe existing law, by way of Act 157, gets it right by addressing any adult who abuses a child.

I'm sorry I can't be with you in-person to speak with the Committee. I will, however, be in the statehouse next week and certainly would welcome an opportunity to testify about S.87. My schedule is wide open next Wednesday if that works for the Committee.

Thanks,
Jeff

Jeff Fannon
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Vermont-NEA