



Good afternoon, Legislators,

My name is Dr. Ellen Stoltz. I am here today to explain from an educator's perspective why passing the graduation requirement for Holocaust and Genocide Education will affect every student and ultimately every citizen in Connecticut.

First, my context:

40-plus years as an educator have brought me diverse teaching, administrator and consulting experiences across our beautiful state: from Coventry, to Hartford, and most recently to Bloomfield, where I had the honor to serve as the district's Chief Academic Officer. I have been in hundreds of classrooms Pre-K-High School. I have seen firsthand the improvements your legislation has made on our schools...legislation such as Anti-bullying Laws and more rigorous graduation requirements.

My message to you is simple:

The Holocaust is already part of Connecticut's 2015 Secondary Social Studies Frameworks. But how will we know if every high school actually teaches it? **IF** you support Senate Bill 452 for Holocaust and Genocide Education as a graduation requirement, **THEN** you will guarantee every student will know the facts. **AS A RESULT**, every high school will produce well-informed citizens who recognize the precursors to genocide and every student will be equipped to take informed action against degradation, bullying, and hate, ensuring genocide never happens again.

In Bryan Stevenson's book, Just Mercy, he writes:

"We are all implicated when we allow other people to be mistreated."

We recognize that mistreatment of any given people is where genocide begins. We read about genocide and anti-Semitism daily through the media. Ensuring all students know the facts must come through you to our students. If you have viewed The Mandate Video on YouTube, you witnessed the lack of knowledge about the holocaust in our students...unless of course, they graduated from the New Jersey Schools where it is a graduation requirement. As legislators, you have the power to ensure every Connecticut graduate leaves our high schools well-informed.

You promoted anti-bullying laws in our schools. These laws improved the culture and climate in every school I've worked in. Your actions resulted in tangible improvements. John Maxwell notes that "Action is what converts human dreams into significance." It is time to act on this bill.

**IF** you believe that every student deserves to take informed action as a citizen, **THEN** take the next step in irradiating bigotry and hate by passing this graduation requirement in Connecticut. **AS A RESULT**, you will be part of the solution, ensuring genocide will never happen again.

Thank you.