

**Melanie Johnston**  
Selectman, Hampton, CT  
164 Main Street  
Hampton, CT 06247  
860-455-9958  
[Melmack2@gmail.com](mailto:Melmack2@gmail.com)

February 23, 2009

Representative Mike Alberts  
LOB Room 4076  
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Mike,

Please defeat the proposed amendment to CGS 10-63 regarding Regional School District dissolution voting. This bill as proposed is manipulative, discriminatory and is responsive only to a local special interest group. The bill proposes to change the voting method for districts with a combined town population of 6,000 or less. There is only *one* Connecticut Regional School District meeting those criteria, RD11. The bill specifically targets and discriminates against the town of Hampton because that is the town which typically votes contrary on this topic to the other two towns in the region.

The existing statute was formulated after much thought and consideration. It was intentionally made difficult to dissolve a region and impossible for one town to force dissolution. Dissolution comes with significant financial and other impacts which may vary significantly town to town. If changing the structure is determined to be the best approach for these times, then it should be changed for all districts across the state and let the proposal be fully debated by all affected towns. The 3 towns of RD 11, are very similar in size. If anything, it makes more sense to retain equal voting for these towns. In district 18, under the current system, a town of 2,000 (Lyme) can make a decision for a town of 7,500 (Old Lyme); in district 1, a town of 737 (Caanan) can make the decision for 5 other towns totaling a population of 15,159; in district 19, a town of 4,398 can make a decision for 2 other towns population 31,359. Those examples seem to be far more a disparate situation than that in Region 11.

And how would the population be counted? Using the Strategic Town Profiles, the RD11 total population is 5,985 (15 people short of 6,000); using Northeast Health Dept data, the population is 6,321; using the UCONN Data Center, it is 6,317. The six thousand threshold may not apply to any existing district!

Clearly, this bill targets RD11 and specifically, Hampton. It is a slippery slope and counter to good legislation, to change the law for one small example. Additionally, RD11 is in the statutorily required process of studying dissolution. This bill would interrupt the process and influence the vote. This bill is very seriously ill conceived and counter to our democratic process and principles by singling out one district.

Thank You,

  
Melanie Johnston  
Selectman, Hampton, CT

