

2/28/19

Re: Opposition to SB 738, SB 457, SB 874

Dear Education Committee Members:

As parents of four children that attend 3 of Connecticut's public schools in two separate districts we are strongly opposed to SB 738, SB 457 and SB 874. We would also oppose any other legislative proposal that creates a precedent for forced regionalization among any of Connecticut's public school districts. Public schools represent a key thread that unites the state's communities. By regionalizing schools, it would destroy that community bond and more importantly, one of the primary reasons why residents have found Connecticut a place to reside.

We can all agree that Connecticut's economy has faced significant challenges since the Financial Crisis a decade ago, resulting in one of the weakest economies of the fifty states. While we understand that the state budget is facing monumental challenges, by implementing regionalization, or even legislating required studies on the topic, it will create an environment of uncertainty for the near future, further hindering the state economy's recovery.

Most concerning however, is that none of the three bills reveal that regionalization would improve the quality of education or save any money for taxpayers. I would think quite the opposite, as there is no mention of the ramifications it will have of students requiring special education. If there is evidence of savings or education enhancements, we implore their sponsors to provide that to the committee and constituents.

The reality is that the state's fiscal ills are primarily driven by structural deficiencies among public employee pensions, including teachers. None of these bills address that elephant in the room and, if there were modest administration savings to be found through regionalization, it would do little to improve education quality or Connecticut's fiscal deficits. To gamble or use Connecticut's children as a social experiment all in the name of finding money to balance the states deficit is reckless and irresponsible.

Please oppose SB 738, SB 457 and SB 874.

Sincerely,

Laura Carl & Matthew Carl