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Written Testimony

SB 457 February 27, 2019

To all members of the Education Committee:

I Oppose SB 457

I am writing to oppose bill SB 457 among Connecticut's public school parents. Taking control out of our elected board of education and giving it to an un-elected committees or commissions in Hartford is a mistake. We live in these towns because we can control every aspect of the education our children receive. I attended New York City public schools, including a high school with 3,500 students with a graduation rate less than 50% (that same high school is now 597 students). The one constant thing in New York City public schools was that every time you graduated from one school, you had to go to a new school with almost none of the kids from the previous school (one or two of the same kids if you were lucky). I moved to New Canaan so that my kids would have continuity in their education from Kindergarten through the twelve grade. These kids that our children go to school with are the same kids that you see in the town parks, teams, stores and restaurants. Forcing or coercing any type of merger between town services that is not voluntary is disingenuous to the American spirit (Freedom, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness).

SB 457 does not improve our children's education

Hartford politicians are worried about some theoretical saving based on some calculations, although there is plenty of evidence that shows that little savings will be achieved for the taxpayers of this great state. The salary of a superintendent is not the reason some towns have high mill rates. Every town has kids with different needs and priorities. This one size fits all model has been proven not to work and for example, New York City is breaking schools into smaller schools, why are we trying to create larger schools involuntarily? I truly believe the economies of scale will help towns voluntarily merge for those towns that have truly small school districts, and we already have plenty of merged school districts in Connecticut.

Merging Liabilities?

When a company merges with another company, the acquirer must assume the debt and liabilities of the company being acquired. Can you honestly say that this would be a smooth process with towns that have debts or liabilities that might extend a decade?

Hands off Our Schools

This state has many issues to fix, such as failing school districts in our most populous cities. Do not take what is working at these towns (schools) and use it against us in order to funnel money to other cities. Should this legislation pass, I will work as hard as I can for the rest of my time in Connecticut to make sure that every politician that voted in favor of this bill is voted out. I will also make sure we challenge this to the state supreme court should this pass. I hope you could understand our point of view on this, and realize that the more freedom people have, the happier we all are.

Anthony Colon

Town of New Canaan