

Chairmen McCrory and Sanchez, Ranking Members Berthel and McCarty, and esteemed members of the Education Committee, thank you for allowing me to submit testimony on SB 457, SB 738 and SB 874.

As a resident of the town of West Hartford and an educator in Regional School district, I ask you to not pass the aforementioned bills. While I support school regionalization, I do not support forced regionalization because it ignores the complexities of regionalization and fosters decisions based on finances rather than what is best for children.

Here are some concerns I have related to the three bills:

- These bills would force regionalization on schools that are already providing high quality education at a reasonable cost.
- The Brookings Papers on Education Policy found that there is sparse evidence that large school districts produce better education outcomes and more evidence that large districts are generally detrimental to education outcomes. Creating overly large new regionalized districts as outlined in proposal SB738 is likely to have negative effects on education.
- The Governor's bill calls for forcing shared superintendents. In 1999, a report from the New Jersey Assembly Task Force on School District Regionalization concluded that, "Sharing administrative services doesn't necessarily cut costs, because as personnel begin to take on region-wide responsibilities, it often becomes necessary to hire more staff to support them."
- The state should not be denying our children any ECS funds they deserve due to political agendas.

While I admire the legislature's desire to provide the highest quality education at a reasonable cost, these bills are not the solution to the existing problems that some of our small towns are facing.

Thank you again for reading my written testimony.

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