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State of Connecticut  
House of Representatives  
Education Committee  
State Capitol  
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Re: Governor's and Regionalization Bills

- S.B. No. 874 An Act Concerning Education Initiatives and Services in Connecticut.
- Proposed S.B. No. 457 An Act Concerning the Size of School Districts.
- Proposed S.B. No. 738 An Act Concerning the Creation of Regional School Districts.

Chairmen McCrory and Sanchez, Ranking Members Berthel and McCarty, and esteemed members of the Education Committee, I am a resident of New Canaan. I thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in opposition to SB 874, SB 457, and SB 738. I oppose these bills for the reasons listed below.

Local school boards know their districts best and understand the needs of their communities. While the idea of saving money by sharing school services sounds attractive, it should not be at the expense of replacing the local, informed school boards.

Regionalization of schools will lead to increased commute times. My home is in the most northwest part of town, approximately a fifteen to twenty minute, one-stop drive to town and local schools. A bus ride with stops almost doubles that time. Forcing children to attend schools out of their local areas will increase transportation time. There aren't enough hours in the day as it is. Adding additional commute time would be completely counterproductive and not in the best interest of our children.

I am in the latter part of my earnings career. My home is a significant part of my retirement plan. In recent years, the value of my home has decreased due to the loss of large employers to other states. School regionalization will further decrease the value of my home. I want to be able to afford retirement. After working all these years, I do not want to rely on anyone to take care of me. The more my home is devalued the less I have to take care of myself.

I ask you to vote no to these education bills. Thank you again for hearing my testimony. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

Regards,  
Diane Gennaro