



TOWN OF EAST GRANBY

INCORPORATED 1858

EAST GRANBY, CONNECTICUT 06026

OFFICE OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN

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February 27, 2019

Senator Douglas McCrory – Co-Chair
Representative Robert Sanchez – Co-Chair

**Testimony on SB 738 – An Act Concerning the Creation of Regional School Districts;
SB 457 – An Act Concerning the Size of School Districts; SB 874 – An Act Concerning
Education Initiatives and Services in Connecticut.**

Dear Senator McCrory, Representative Sanchez and Committee Members,

I am writing to you regarding all three of the above referenced bills. I am opposed to efforts to force consolidation of any local functions. Such one-size-fits-all approaches are seldom successful in achieving savings and are likely to undermine the delivery of services. I do emphatically support efforts to facilitate voluntary regional/shared services approaches where it is determined that savings can be achieved and the quality of services maintained

The State Department of Education has studied Small School District consolidation and has determined that forced consolidation will not achieve significant costs savings due to increased transportation costs and education will suffer due to students spending more time on the bus than the classroom.

Encouraging towns to share services or consolidate functions is beneficial, forcing towns and cities to regionalize their school districts without considering their unique needs raises serious concerns as follows:

- Consolidation does not always produce savings. East Granby's school district has explored consolidation options and concluded that consolidation would not result in any cost savings. Consolidation raised concerns regarding whether the quality of education would suffer.
- Consolidation may undermine the delivery of educational services. In rural communities like East Granby, forced consolidation may result in less time in the classroom and more time on the bus. Additional transportation costs may wipe out any savings generated from consolidation.
- Local Schools are vital to our community. East Granby's schools are often the heart of the community. All ages attend plays, concerts and athletic events. One of the top factors that people consider when buying a home is the quality of the schools. Decisions about whether to consolidate schools should be left up to the town and the taxpayers.

I certainly support efforts to look at efficiencies including shared Superintendent's and business offices for small school districts like ours and would like to see a voluntary approach.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James M. Hayden", with a stylized flourish at the end.

James M. Hayden
First Selectman