

74 Sill Lane  
Old Lyme, CT 06371  
February 25, 2019

**VIA E-MAIL**

Hon. Martin Looney, President Pro Tempore  
Connecticut State Senate  
Hartford, CT

Re: Education Committee Testimony  
Bill 457 & Bill 738

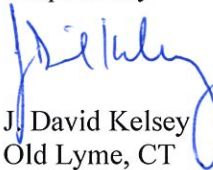
Dear Senator Looney,

I am strongly opposed to the idea of the state forcing school (or any) regionalization with the threat of withholding state funds. The idea that local school districts do not operate as economically as they may because the state is picking up the tab is patently false; for the vast majority of the towns with state aid, the aid is not large enough to influence that sort of explicit, conniving decision. In fact, the creation of larger, centralized bureaucracies rarely result in savings, because you may only have one superintendent (with a larger salary to oversee a large new region), but mark my words, two assistant superintendents will sprout up and get paid what the two superintendents were getting paid, plus support staff. The same goes for facility managers, business managers and the rest of administration.

I have seen our local regional school board in action, and I have been part of our region's facilities committee and board of finance liason to board of education for many years. I do not think becoming a minority partner with East Lyme will do anything but increase complexity, increase costs and reduce the ability of our community to decide on its continued path to excellence.

I hope that both of these bills are defeated - they are hubristic examples of well-meaning legislators having half-baked solutions to problems that do not exist in the main (please see idea for "Licenses for Cats" from last session). It is the problem with the huge number of state-mandated programs that are rolled out with no thoughtful cost-benefit analysis, but instead a host of quickly written talking points to get support. Slow down the legislative ideas, and give evaluation and administration of what we have a chance to eliminate programs that waste money and DO NOT WORK and provide REAL analysis of what constitutes a problem that warrants drastic and hard-to-reverse action. I have seen absolutely no credible financial analysis of the benefits and costs of either of these bills.

Respectfully



J. David Kelsey  
Old Lyme, CT