

February 27, 2019

Regarding proposals:

S.B. 457, *An Act Concerning the Size of School Districts*

S.B. 738, *An Act Concerning the Creation of Regional School Districts*

S.B. 874, *An Act Concerning Education Initiatives and Services in Connecticut*

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

We are strongly opposed to the proposed forced regionalization of Connecticut public schools and we urge you not to pass this legislation. We moved to our town in 2010 largely because of the excellent public schools. Our four children attend the public schools and we believe in the concept of public education. We also believe that keeping control of the schools belongs with the local communities. The local school board and administrators know the teachers, parents and students and are best able to make decisions for the good of the students in that community. Families have the opportunity to get involved and have a say in decision making which benefits the children and makes for stronger schools. Family involvement in our town also translates into free volunteers at school functions, fundraising for our schools, and plenty of donations of goods and money for nearby, less affluent communities. Creating larger, regional districts will destroy the close community nature of our schools and the quality of children's education will suffer.

Ever higher taxes, loss of corporate jobs, poor state fiscal responsibility are already making Connecticut a less desirable state to live in. Our family and many people we know are here for the schools. No one wants anonymous regional bureaucracies and more state level control of our schools. Forced regionalization will make some consider private schools. Others will just leave the state. Property values will drop even lower. The already soft real estate market will crumble.

The quality of the education for our children must not be forfeited for the fiscal problems of our state government. Residents of our town already pay a disproportionate amount of taxes and we support our local schools with very little help from the state. Our local schools are doing an excellent job. Leave us alone to educate our children without interference from Hartford.

Thank you again for hearing our testimony.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Kim, MD and Chang Soo Kim, MD
Town of New Canaan

