

March 14, 2019

Testimony regarding proposed school regionalization legislation - SB874; SB457; SB738

As a resident of a town where one of the few regional school districts in Connecticut is operating successfully, I think that looking at school regionalization options is a worthwhile plan. The Killingworth-Haddam schools have an excellent academic record. There is definitely cost savings with this regional school financial situation. The argument of a disadvantage to housing sales does not appear to be one here in comparison to similar towns.

In addition, the opportunity to offer an improved education for a greater number of the students in multiple towns and cities is important. It is a way for greater equity for all the students of Connecticut. I have lived and had a child attend a school in Fairfax County, Virginia. The Fairfax County school district at that time was 800,000 students. The schools in this type of district because they have shared budgetary considerations then had to work to achieve a more balanced educational offering for all students.

I believe that the fears that accompany this type of proposed legislation and governmental effort could have been alleviated to a certain extent if it had been better explained to the citizens before trying to pass this legislation. Lack of sufficient information, particularly in the light of the long held tradition of local government power of towns throughout New England, makes this type of proposal almost impossible to carry out. In my opinion, it was introduced and handled poorly so far and I suspect that my testimony will be one of very few in favor. Already it is entitled "forced school regionalization" and we all know how most people fight against something they feel is being "forced" on them.

The potential and real advantages to school regionalization for Connecticut do matter to me. This is why I am writing in support of these bills today.

Carolyn Reimers
Killingworth, Connecticut