

Testimony on SB 738, 457 and 874
February 28, 2019

To the members of the hearing committee,

Thank you for reading this testimony and taking my viewpoint into consideration. My name is Margaret Saunders and I've lived at 152 Long Lots Road in New Canaan since February 2012.

I encourage you to vote "no" to **Senate Bill 738: AN ACT CONCERNING THE CREATION OF REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT, 457: AN ACT CONCERNING THE THE SIZE OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS, and 874: AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATION INITIATIVES AND SERVICES IN CONNECTICUT.**

My husband and I were living in Houston, Texas until 2012. While we were happy with many aspects of life in Texas, once we had children we realized that we would have to make a change. We chose to relocate to Connecticut because of our experience with the public school system. We saw firsthand that a regionalized school system did not foster an effective education for children. The system failed because of the remoteness and bureaucracy of the administration. Parents had no ability to communicate with those in charge of the school, and layers of administration added costly expenses. Additionally we had no input as to what was taught in the schools.

When we decided to move we prioritized the schools as we looked for our new home. We looked into communities in New Jersey, New York, and Long Island before choosing Connecticut. The reason we

chose to live in Connecticut was because of the excellent reputation of the state's schools. We looked into numerous towns, all with highly rated, autonomous school systems, before settling upon New Canaan. While we love our town, I also think we would have been just as happy in many of our nearby communities, as they also prioritize education as the main focus of their town. Our experience has been fantastic - the quality of education is excellent, we have open and honest discourse with everyone from our childrens' teachers, to their schools' principals, and with the superintendent. Regionalizing the school system will limit this discourse and change the dynamic between families and schools.

Please oppose the regionalization bills that have been put forward. They will undermine the education quality and fabric of Connecticut.

Sincerely,

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