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To CT Lawmakers,

We join thousands of families in New Canaan and surrounding environs who are concerned about the new bills that deal with school redistricting and consolidation.

These bills (at best) produce a cloud of uncertainty about our school systems around the state and will serve some districts/communities at the risk of underserving others. The idea that forced regionalization is "on the table" is unsettling and frankly, unacceptable.

While data may help fuel decisions, creating a Commission on Shared School Services for the purpose of developing a plan for the redistricting or consolidation of school services is not a welcomed solution at the State level. Compromising some districts to help others, while using incentives, grants, or tax changes does not appeal to the large number of families who have selected their hometowns based on the school districts.

In terms of redistricting: My family, like so many in New Canaan, purchased an over-priced property with high taxes solely to give our children an opportunity to attend good schools. In our town, our properties have lost their value and cannot be sold easily, while our schools have been forced to deal with a \$1 million dollar cut. My family specifically lives in New Canaan on the Wilton border. At an exploratory level, and hypothetically, the redistricting bills could force our children to attend Wilton's schools. There are no incentives that can offset this, particularly since we paid 50% more for a home in New Canaan (than others did in Wilton) for the sole purpose that our children would benefit from the New Canaan school system. It seems to us the approach is more like "Peter is paying for Paul."

In terms of consolidating: Burdening some resources to free others is "penny wise and pound foolish." Consolidation threatens district staff, teachers and students. It impacts the quality of our education – the things that go beyond a curriculum...it threatens the joy of teaching and learning and the nuances of education. This approach leaves little room for giving children a school system that promotes self-realization, civic duty, mindfulness....transformation.

While we recognize there may be a few districts that may benefit from this exercise, we do not believe this should be legislated across Connecticut. As parents that utilize New Canaan Public Schools, we know the importance and value of local control of our schools. It is a foundational value of our educational system, and one that has resulted in world-class educational outcomes for our children.

And so, we are joining many concerned parents to appeal for better sense in this matter. Thank you for considering our testimony.

Grant and Lisa Silver