

To:

Education Committee, Connecticut General Assembly
Legislative Office Building, Room 3100
Hartford, CT 06106
Submitted Via Email: EDtestimony@cga.ct.gov

From:

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Regarding: Written Testimony- Opposition to SB 457

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.

I am writing to oppose SB 457. Forced regionalization of school districts as dictated by the State of Connecticut is not fair or appropriate. Communities should be able to determine whether regionalization is appropriate for their towns and children. Many residents choose where they live, one of the most important life choices impacting their families, based solely on that town's schools. Personal connections to community and community pride are forged around the town's schools. Forcing regionalization undermines the choices made by parents in choosing where to raise their families.

It is also not clear that regionalization will provide any savings. For example, while superintendent positions can be consolidated, in smaller districts superintendents often fill multiple key managerial responsibilities (i.e. personnel, budget/finance). Larger districts, due to size, require unique managers to serve all key managerial roles.

Many factors need to be seriously vetted, including; local control of a town's budget, local representation on a Regional BOE, athletics, clubs, band/drama, extracurricular activities (e.g. school dances), transportation time, class size implications, and more. These decisions are best made by local residents and the local boards of education who are duly elected by town residents.

Thank you again for hearing my testimony. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joseph D. Spurgeon
East Haddam, CT