

**Michael Urgo  
First Selectman  
Town of North Stonington  
Before the Education Committee  
March 13, 2019**

**Cc: Senator Heather Somers; Representative Kate Rotella  
Re: SB-457 – AN ACT CONCERNING THE SIZE OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

Thank you, committee members, for the opportunity to comment before you today.

I am writing to you on behalf of the Town of North Stonington. Over the past 12 years our town has looked at different approaches regarding our small school population including regionalization. In short, our town found regionalization of schools to be impractical and did not provide substantial financial savings.

We found that there would be limited savings should we have regionalized. Furthermore, our schools which were recently ranked as “schools of distinction” in the State provide a far superior education for our residents. Our cost per pupil is the second lowest in our area of schools with a PK-12 system. We are in the process of completion of renovation on our schools and have been told our project is the most fiscally responsible the Office of School Construction has seen on a square footage basis.

Our town is open to regionalization by attracting students from neighboring towns that currently do not have a Middle/High School option. The constraints this bill puts on small towns however with small population does not put the student’s education first. I oppose this bill as being proposed.

There are other ideas that could be discussed such as sharing more services throughout small districts such as high-level administration, technology, and purchasing among others. These are areas that can and should be looked at.

I would urge the committee to look at the data and you will see that indeed the smaller schools are the ones that perform the best and provide the highest level of education to students and in our case, at a very affordable rate. By forcing regionalization in the manner which is being proposed not only will you be providing a hardship to families in small towns, but you will be harming the student’s education and involvement in their schools while also in many cases costing the towns and the state more money.

Sincerely,

Mike Urgo  
First Selectman