

SB 738, SB 457, SB 874

Amy Zerbe, Darien CT

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony on SB 457, SB 738 and SB 874. I oppose SB 738, SB 457 and SB 874, and I oppose forced regionalization and consolidation of our school districts. I believe that regionalization will negatively impact the quality of our schools and our town, and could end up costing the state more money. Although Darien exceeds the 2,000 student threshold for regionalization and consolidation set forth in SB 457 and SB 874, I believe that this threshold may increase in the future.

I moved to Darien in 2005 with my family because of the town's outstanding public schools; I would not have chosen this town otherwise. Many families move to Darien and stay in Darien because of the high quality of our schools. Regionalization, or the prospect of regionalization, will deter those families from settling in Darien, in addition to other Connecticut towns. Furthermore, I anticipate that families will move out of Connecticut to other states with good school districts. There will be a net outflow of people, and tax revenues will decline. The state will ultimately have to broaden and deepen the tax base.

Darien is a fiscally responsible town. As you may know, the Darien schools receive minimal state funding. I believe that Darien will be penalized for the financial woes of the state.

Thank you.