

FROM: Alison Barker

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CONCERNING: Opposition to SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Alison Barker, and as a parent of public school students, I strongly oppose SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874, as well as any other bill that opens the door to forced regionalization of Connecticut Public Schools.

My family recently moved to Canton, CT from a similarly sized town in Illinois, about 40 minutes outside Chicago. My daughter was a middle school student at the time, and my son was intermediate school aged. Their class sizes were about 150 kids. The high school they were going to feed into, had we remained there, would have combined with two other districts, and would have made each of their graduating classes between 650-700 students. Our friends who still live there have shared stories of their children not having enough attention from teachers, class sizes being too large, and not being able to participate in sports and other activities simply because unless you are the best of the best, there are no resources for everyone to participate.

We chose to move to Canton out of several other areas of Connecticut we were considering for the small class sizes, teacher involvement, and ability for students to participate in activities. Our children have thrived since entering this school district. The teachers and administrators care about their students and know them, and the community participates in school related activities. Combining multiple districts would undoubtedly create some of the same issues our friends in Illinois face with their children- overcrowding, lack of care from staff, and inability to participate. With the prevalence of private schools in this area, I am certain you will see public school enrollment also decline, as many people will be unhappy and have the means to put their children in private schools.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony. I hope you will oppose SB 738, SB 457, SB 874 and any other legislation that opens the door to forced regionalization of Connecticut public schools.

Thank you for your time,

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