

Regarding Bills SB 457, SB 738, SB 874

Chairman McCarty 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, SB 738 and SB 874,

I would like to preface by stating that as a Wolcott, CT resident and parent, I oppose school regionalization for my town. I have been a Wolcott resident for over three years. The principal reason I moved from Waterbury to Wolcott is because of the stellar school system they currently have. My son is a sophomore in high school. He is an honors student and is involved in various clubs, including the robotics. I am very happy with his academic and social progress and will not like to see his education jeopardized in any way due to regionalization and allocating educational and city funds elsewhere when our per student spending is so minimal compared to other towns and cities. Minimal investment with great results, why change that?

On the other hand, I have been an educator at the Waterbury Public Schools system for over 10 years and a previous resident of Waterbury for about 15 years. I know firsthand the challenges the Waterbury Public Schools have experienced over the years. I also know the wonderful programs the city has put in place to make the education in Waterbury a priority. We have received good funding for programs such as new curriculum, technology, good professional development for teachers, and a healthy per student spending allocation of money. Although Waterbury faces many challenges, such as poverty, higher crime, and increased immigration, I believe regionalizing schools will not be help for the city as it would dilute the funding we are receiving now. Bussing students from one district to another will also be a burden for students and parents, amongst other problems such as students adapting to those changes and teachers and administrators having to consolidate materials, offices, and services.

I urge you to reconsider these bills. The school districts and our children should not carry the burden of an inefficient government administration and school districts should not be consolidated to save some dollars to the state. Education should be a priority, and decisions made in the capitol should only impact our school systems positively. The aforementioned bills are a threat to our educational system. As a parent and educator, it is my testimony and belief that schools should not be regionalized as it will have a negative impact on students, teachers, and parents as well as our communities. Please use your power to oppose and stop these bills.

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

Respectfully,

Betzaida Bayouth

