

From: Kara Cruoglio karacruoglio@gmail.com  
Subject: Bill 457 and Bill 738  
Date: Feb 28, 2019 at 4:28:29 PM  
To: edtestimony@cga.ct.gov  
Cc: Craig Miner Craig.Miner@ctsenaterepublicans.com

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To whom it may concern:

I am writing in reference to Bill 457 and Bill 738 and wish these comments to be entered into the official record for the March 1, 2019 public hearing, which I am unable to attend in person.

My name is Kara Cruoglio, and I live in Litchfield, CT. My son attends second grade at Litchfield Center School.

My family moved to Connecticut about 3 years ago, just as my son was about to start kindergarten. We selected Connecticut as our new home in large part because of the strength of the public school system. We moved to the Northwest corner fully aware that school regionalization was on the horizon and would likely impact our family before my son graduated from high school. It was, in fact, one of the reasons we selected Litchfield rather than one of the smaller, surrounding towns.

As a parent, I have been nothing short of overjoyed with the quality of the education my son is receiving. As a taxpayer in Litchfield and in Connecticut, I have been pleased, overall, with the careful stewardship of my money during the annual school budgeting process.

Since moving here, I have learned that school regionalization has been an active conversation in Litchfield for some time, that the idea has support from both Republicans and Democrats around town, and that the Litchfield Board of Education has voted unanimously in favor of regionalization several times. I have also learned that there is far less support in the surrounding towns and thus that advancing the conversation has been difficult at best.

Let me be clear: I am in favor of school regionalization. When done well, I think it can benefit both students and taxpayers. Additionally, it seems clear to me that the towns in our area are going to need a little push in order for it to happen, and I am not wholeheartedly opposed to that push coming from the state. HOWEVER, the key phrase for me in this is "done well." I am not in favor of school districts being forced into a regional structure using parameters dictated by the state rather than crafted by local leaders who understand this area, our schools and our students. Given that, this seems like an issue where it would be in everyone's best interest for the Democratic leaders in Hartford and our local Republican representatives, to put aside their partisan posturing and work together on the right solution. One that, above all, serves our students and our schools best. I hope we can count on all of you to do that, and I look forward to the ongoing conversation.

Sincerely,  
Kara Cruoglio  
Litchfield, CT