

Paul B. Hendrickson
97 Hoyt Street
Darien, CT 06820
203-323-4816; rjphendrickson@aol.com

To: Education Committee, Connecticut State Legislature

Subj: Senate Bills 457 and 738; Governor's Bill – Senate Bill 874

Why are these bills being introduced? What are the alleged problems that the bills will solve? The subject bills suggest regionalization is the best course for Connecticut's education system; however, there is no background analysis to justify the bills. Also, the two senate bills 457 and 738 are sponsored by Senators Duff and Looney whose towns would not be affected by the proposed bills. This is a legislative NIMBY move.

The bills intimate that Hartford knows best how to educate the children of Connecticut rather than the local towns and boards of education. What would Hartford think if Washington told them what to do? The people closest to the students know best how to educate their children.

There is no evidence in any of the three bills that regionalization would save the State any money. It is also questionable that regionalization will save Towns any money – for one thing, consider the increased transportation costs involved with regionalization (transporting students over a larger geographic area, and increasing their bus time). It is up to each Town to determine how to best spend its tax revenue on education.

I am currently on the Darien Board of Finance and have served in that capacity for approximately ten years. Also, I was a Selectman for a year and a half. I have been a school business manager for over ten years; prior to that I worked in corporations for twenty-eight years. Regionalization reminds me of headquarters telling the salesman how to sell when it is the salesman who is closer to the customer and knows his/her needs. Discussion is needed, not edicts from Hartford.

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