

To the Committee:

We are writing this written testimony on behalf of our family, but most importantly on behalf of our two Children. Our Children have no voice or say about what is being proposed so we need to be their advocate and speak up for what is best for them, the other children in our state, and the children in regional school district 10.

We are strongly opposed to Senate Bills 457, 738, and the Governor's Bill 874 for the following reasons.

There are numerous negative consequences of these bills. Listed below are a few that we would like to highlight.

1) By expanding the foot print of the school district, students will be on buses longer making for a longer day for them-less time in the classroom-and something important to us, less crucial family time. That is counter-productive as we strive to improve the education, mental well-being of our children.

2) Increased costs to build new schools to accommodate more children in the new regions and the cost of transportation. We fear what will happen with our current school in our town. How does this help lessen cost?

3) Because it will be such a broad area, with more students, and less oversight. There will be a negative effect on the quality of education, management of the schools and programs in place. How is this improving the education of our children? How will this allow us to protect our children and be sure they receive the services they need?

4) With a larger and therefore more diverse population of needs in a larger school district, there will be a loss of control over school

decision making and loss of ability to design programs, learning expectations, and educational tools that are unique to the needs of a group of children. It is already hard to meet the needs of individual learners in smaller school districts. How will this benefit our children?

5) This will cause many of our teachers to lose their jobs. It will lead to larger class sizes. Larger class sizes is not the answer. Fewer teachers are not the answer. Again, how will this help our children?

6) We chose the town we live in because of the school district, Region 10. We have paid taxes to this town to go towards the school our children attend. Through these bills, you are now taking that choice away from us and telling us where our children will go. Too much government involvement. This is a town issue, which tax payers would vote on to decide to regionalize towns. It is not the state's roll. Being that our town is a small rural town, we work very hard to keep costs in check, especially because, based on the Educational Cost Sharing Model, we are given minimal support for education dollars from the State of CT.

Governor Lamont said it is “a carrot, not a stick.” Budgets in towns are very tight already with funding being cut left and right. While you say it won't be required-the carrot may be the only option for many towns and that is unacceptable and is a back handed way of requiring regionalization.

Do not use our children and their education to fix the financial issues the state is facing. Period. We unequivocally do not support any of the proposed bills.

Lindsay and Brian Paganini  
Harwinton, CT.