

Subject: Opposition to SBs 457, 738, and 874

I firmly stand with the Connecticut parents, students, teachers, and staff who oppose SBs 457, 738, and 874.

My husband and I both grew up in Connecticut and made the decision to remain in Connecticut after graduating from college because this was a state where we wanted to raise our family. Small town living, being part of a tight, caring community, with a small school system where our children knew every one of their classmates and were not just a number are all reasons we chose to live and stay in our small Connecticut town for the last 18 years.

The Senate Bills 457, 738, and 874 being proposed would negatively impact this wonderful dynamic.

Due to our size, our town would be subject to the proposed legislation to regionalize, and being the smaller town, we would potentially have less than equal representation as part of a newly formed district.

Over the years, I have been highly involved with the PTO, as well as our Board of Education. I've served on committees, lead parent focus groups, and worked with the administration to better understand the parent and student perspective regarding issues such as communication, homework policy, budgets, renovations, etc. I've thoroughly appreciated that my voice and contributions are welcome and invited as part of the process. Being part of a small community, we all strive to work together to create the most nurturing environment fiscally possible for our children. Changing this tight-knit, cooperative dynamic will have impacts across the board – not only on positive parent involvement, but the quality of the education, staffing, and has even created situations in other Connecticut districts where towns are fighting against each other rather than harmoniously working in the best interest of the students.

This legislation will not improve the overall quality of education offered our next generation. Beyond larger classroom sizes and fewer staff members on a payroll, regionalizing will increase the number of hours my children are commuting to and from school. They are already tired after their school days, after school activities, and homework loads, now instead of improving their quality of life, we're asking them to wake up earlier and get home later. They already have such little time in their day to be children, if anything, I'm always trying to find more

family time. Regionalization will have far too many negative impacts on my children and family.

How appealing does this legislation make a state that currently has one of the highest tax burdens and currently ranks fourth among states with the highest percentage of outbound moves? It doesn't add to the appeal of an already tough sell. Passing these three Senate Bills will only serve to give us and others one more reason to join the abundance of former Nutmeggers who have already left Connecticut for more attractive states in which to raise their families.

I oppose SBs 457, 738, and 874.

Anne Marie Pelletier

Resident of Canton, CT