

Re: Opposition to SB 738, SB 457, SB 874

Dear Education Committee Members:

While I no longer have children in the school system, I am a taxpayer and a resident that owns real estate in Trumbull, CT.

One of the reasons people move to Trumbull is the school system. That is what we did when our son was young. As a realtor I can tell you regionalization will reduce property values and cause people to be very uneasy about the education system they are buying in to. And with the market being as bad as it is at the moment, why would you want to add to that? Besides, why would we change an education system that works so well?

I am also a former Board of Finance Member and a former Town Council Member. One of the most important things we do in both of those positions is a budget. As you know, the budget for the BOE is a line item in the larger budget. We give them money, but we cannot tell them how to spend it. So, I find it rather odd and hypocritical, that you feel you can “force” school systems to regionalize. Effectively telling them how to spend their money or punish them for not doing so. When did CT become a monarchy? Besides, most responsible school systems are already finding ways to save and consolidate. And regionalization is not proven to do either.

Another important reason to oppose forced regionalization includes the potential degradation of education quality.

“Research by the National Education Policy Center concluded that benefits from school district consolidation are “vastly overestimated.” Further, an article in Education Finance and Policy suggested that district consolidation may actually create negative impacts such as higher transportation costs, a “leveling up” of salaries, and more negative attitudes among staff members and parents.”

The reality is, your attempt to force regionalization is an attempt to shift financial burdens created by you onto local towns and cities. Shift chairs on the deck of a sinking ship. A fake and a phony solution, like funnel monies through the GF to artificially balance the budget.

Finally and maybe most important in the education process, “Forcing schools to regionalize would deprive parents and boards of education of that decision-making authority, and that is unacceptable.”- State Rep Tom O’Dea

Keep your Hands Off Our Schools and treat your financial problems responsibly.

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