

Testimony re S.B. 457, S.B. 738 and S.B. 874

Chairman McCrory and Sanchez, Ranking Members Berthel and McCarty and esteemed members of the Education Committee, thank you for allowing me to submit testimony on S.B. 457, S.B. 738 and S.B. 874. I am a resident of the Town of New Canaan. I am writing as a resident to oppose S.B. 457, S.B. 738 and S.B. 874. New Canaan schools are ranked highly in CT and nationally. As a parent of two NCHS graduates and a 12-year member of the New Canaan Board of Education, I have had a chance to study why New Canaan schools get such great success. In my view it is because we are focused on the needs of the children in our district and due to local control can respond efficiently to opportunities and challenges. We hire an administration and teachers who are focused on the best interests of the child, plan in a thoughtful, research based way for the future and work together on a daily basis to implement curriculum effectively and nimbly make needed adjustments. Since the schools get funding from the town, we are responsive to town needs and go through a rigorous process each year to show we are delivering a high quality product as cost effectively as possible. Where it makes economic sense New Canaan schools share services with the town and with neighboring school districts. Local control and local engagement are key elements to the success of New Canaan's schools.

The proposed regionalization bills would take away local control for no clear gain. They would impact the education of our children negatively. If there are inefficiencies in other districts then please address those with financial incentives or other non-mandatory measures, not with blanket consolidation bills.

CT is facing big financial challenges. It needs to retain and grow jobs. One of CT's competitive advantages is that it provides top-notch education in many schools that attract people to move to CT over other locations in the tri-state area. Please do not act to reduce this competitive advantage.

Thank you again for hearing my testimony.

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