

**Subject:** In Opposition to SB 738, SB 457 and SB 874

**Date:** February 27, 2019

Chairmen McCrory and Sanchez, Ranking Members Berthel and McCarty, and esteemed members of the Education Committee, thank you for allowing me to submit testimony on SB 738, SB 457 and SB 874.

As a parent of a public school student, I am writing to express my vehement opposition to SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874, or any variation of these bills or any new bills that would force regionalization or consolidation of school districts in Connecticut.

Nowhere in these bills is the quality of education even mentioned as the rationale for forced regionalization. Instead the focus is on alleged "cost savings." In fact there are multiple studies showing that consolidation of school districts will not result in any cost savings and will lower the quality of education across the board.

My husband and I moved to CT in 1997 for my first job at Boehringer Ingelheim in Ridgefield. We had been planning to move to Westchester County, NY which would have been a much better commute for my husband who works in NYC, but decided on CT for its excellent schools (we were just starting our family).

Ten years later I took a position at Bayer Healthcare, originally based in West Haven, but the company subsequently moved its US Headquarters to NJ. Yet another example of a great company leaving this state! Although I was offered relocation and we could have easily moved to NY or NJ, my family and I decided to stay in CT, despite horrible commutes and rising taxes, all because of our excellent school district and great community.

Surely we can find a way to fix the state budget responsibly without decimating the one good thing this state still has going for it - our excellent public schools. You will see a mass exodus of high-paying tax payers and even more businesses if the quality of our schools declines. Bills such as these are already having a detrimental effect on our state as they are scaring people away from moving to CT and are yet another reason current residents are looking to leave the state.

Please oppose SB 738, 457 and 874 and any other legislation that would allow the forced regionalization of Connecticut public schools.

Respectfully,

Julie Rudnicki, Ph.D.  
73 Pipers Hill Rd.  
Wilton, CT 06897