

Dear Education Committee,

My name is Jane Scheiber, and I am a junior at Lyme-Old Lyme High School (Region 18). I understand that on Friday, March 1, 2019, you will be holding a public hearing on Senate Bill 457 and Senate Bill 738, as well as Governor's Bill SB 874.

It is difficult for me to find the words that could properly articulate the devastation this would bring not only to me, my friends and peers, our relationships with our teachers, and the entire education system in the state of Connecticut. Under Senate Bill 457, my school district's student body would be forced to double in size. I have lived in Florida and in other school districts within the state of Connecticut; I have been to many different kinds of schools as a result. In Florida, I attended a small private school, The Out-of-Door Academy, for fourth, fifth, and sixth grade. In the small class sizes, I felt very close with my teachers, and this bond fostered strong intellectual growth and interest in numerous subjects. In sixth grade, my English teacher, Mr. Woodworth, gave me the passion and love for language that I still have today. I believe that this bond is what created academic success, not the rigor of the curriculum. A strong bond between an educator and a pupil is the most essential element in education. It is not curriculum. It is not academic rigor.

I eventually left the private school due the financial strain it put on my family. Although my family values education deep within our core, my brother and I could no longer attend one of the few, strong options (the private school) in our weak school district. The following year, for seventh grade I attended Pine View School, a magnet school for gifted students. My class size went from eighty students to 250, and my passion for school went from brilliantly alive to wilted and neglected. The one class I felt truly successful in was Civics and the Law. I had never previously been interested in law or its origins, but my teacher, Mr. Murray, exhibited such

an enthusiastic passion that engaged the students and drove them to success. In all other classes, the teachers simply could not give the level of enthusiasm that they wanted.