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 Subject: Opposition to SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874
 To: <edtestimony@cga.ct.gov>

I am a parent of public school students and am strongly opposed to SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874 and any other bills forcing regionalization of Connecticut public schools.

I moved to Westport, Connecticut from Huntington, NY five years ago specifically because of the schools here. I zeroed in on Westport, because I saw the quality of the education and believe the smaller sized schools allows more focus to be given to individual students... I am very pleased with the involvement and attention currently given to my children (and to me) from the teachers, the administrators and the local community... My kids are thriving and are not just a number (which is how they will be treated in larger schools).

The quality of the schools was the most important consideration my wife and I had in moving to Connecticut and selecting the town to live in... and these bills (SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874) will seriously erode the character and quality of our local schools, our town, and will impact the whole reason we moved to Connecticut. If our schools are disrupted, I fear we will be forced to move again - likely back to New York State (and Connecticut will lose another taxpayer - not to mention the loss of all the future people that come here because of the school like I did).

On top of all of this, based on the analysis of state spending per pupil in Southwest CT I completed below, **the state is spending 5 times more funds per pupil in districts that have more than 40,000 residents...** Therefore, this makes no sense to force smaller towns to consolidate their schools because the towns that would be impacted by these forced consolidations are not even where the major state funding is going!

CT State Spending per pupil by town size (Southwest CT)

Local Southwest CT Towns (including mine)	Local \$ Per Pupil	State \$ Per Pupil	Tuition/Other \$ Per Pupil	Fed \$ Per Pupil	Student Funding - \$ Per Pupil	Town Larger than 40k	Town Larger than 40k - State \$ Per Pupil	Town Lesser than 40k - State \$ Per Pupil
Bridgeport	\$ 3,213	\$ 9,854	\$ 201	\$ 1,076	\$ 14,344	Y	\$ 9,854	
Fairfield	\$ 15,551	\$ 729	\$ 16	\$ 265	\$ 16,561	Y	\$ 729	
Norwalk	\$ 14,426	\$ 1,949	\$ 291	\$ 427	\$ 17,093	Y	\$ 1,949	
Stamford	\$ 15,390	\$ 1,987	\$ 163	\$ 524	\$ 18,064	Y	\$ 1,987	
Darien	\$ 18,256	\$ 831		\$ 232	\$ 19,319	N		\$ 831
Wilton	\$ 18,409	\$ 657	\$ 39	\$ 232	\$ 19,337	N		\$ 657
New Canaan	\$ 18,715	\$ 450		\$ 215	\$ 19,380	N		\$ 450
Westport	\$ 18,949	\$ 495	\$ 59	\$ 317	\$ 19,820	N		\$ 495
Greenwich	\$ 20,392	\$ 448	\$ 128	\$ 363	\$ 21,331	Y	\$ 448	

Source: CTSchooFinance.org - Estimated 2016 Per-Student Funding by Revenues Source

Average \$ 2,993 \$ 608

CT State spends 5x the money in districts with > 40k residents

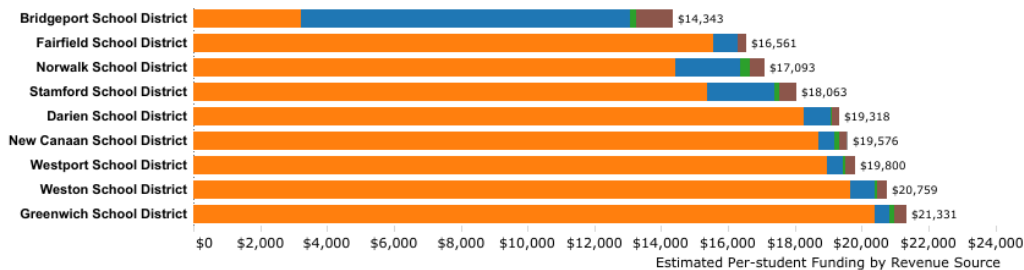


Chart Selector

Estimated 2016 Per-student Funding by Revenue Source

Measure Names

- Federal \$PP
- Tuition / Other \$PP
- State \$PP
- Local \$PP

If any school consolidations make sense, these decisions should be left to the local communities to figure out... Local communities are very capable and can make these most important decisions for themselves - instead of the State forcing a blanket one-size-fits-all requirement.

I cannot emphasize enough how important this is to me. This is playing with fire. The mere threat of this legislation makes me feel I should consider developing a moving plan. Please stop adjusting what works well in our communities and start focusing on what needs attention...

I hope you will oppose SB 738, SB 457, SB 874, and any other legislation that opens the door to forced regionalization of Connecticut public schools.

Brian Senatore
Westport, Connecticut