

Written Testimony from James Voter, resident of Union, CT

I have never written testimony for any bill in the State of Connecticut until today. I write this testimony on behalf of my children and in support of Union Elementary School. I find it not only appalling, but embarrassing that I need to defend a school from the State of Connecticut clutches, but that is exactly what these bills propose.

I came back to the place I grew up because of the school system. I was a student of Union Elementary and now my children are. This was intentional. I realized long ago how important a small town and a small school was for the growth and well being of a child. I was one once and remember it fondly. I wish for my children to be able to experience that for themselves.

If CT passes these two bills, you will have unintended consequences. One being even more people leaving this state. In addition, those that sponsor and support these bills will be responsible for the negative alteration of children as they ruin their sense of stability and destroy the bonds they have with their friends and with their school. Children need stability, structure, friendship, and nurturing in a safe, familiar setting. They must have a sense of community. My children enjoy school, enjoy their surroundings and are excelling. They are happy. What is being proposed would destroy all of that. Why? Because some representative in a region far removed thinks of what is best for their region, without a single thought of how people in a quiet northeast CT community live. This isn't a solution at all. It is passing along one regions problems onto another. It creates new and unnecessary issues and with new issues come new expenses. A representative from New Haven does not have the slightest idea what takes place in my town, yet can propose a detrimental bill that can determine our fate for us? No, that is not acceptable. I did not come back to my childhood town to have my children transported miles and miles, increasing risks on the road, to some other town's school. We have a school, a relatively brand new school, with dedicated teachers and staff. Parents have direct access to their children, the teachers, and the administration. Our children are in an environment that is safe, secure and beneficial. We know what is happening with our children at all times. We are a tight knit community and the school is exactly what the State of Connecticut needs as an example of how schools should run.

Perhaps Senator Looney should demonstrate by consolidating the New Haven schools first and show the State how well it works and how much money can be saved. We have our own representatives for the State and both are opposed to these bills. That tells me we do not need other Representatives forcing change upon us. Especially when it comes to our children. We will decide that on a local level the way we have been doing. If spending must be cut, then there are many other ways that do not involve children. They are our most precious resource and the future. We should want to invest more in them, not less. Shame on anyone who thinks of saving money over educating children within their own town borders.