

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 457, SB 738, SB 7150 and SB 874.

As a parent of two Darien public school students, I strongly oppose SB 738, SB 457, SB 7150 and SB 874 and any other bill that opens the door to forced regionalization of Connecticut Public Schools, including coercing towns by removing already limited funds.

My family specifically moved to Darien for the schools, and existing school quality is what keeps us here. None of these bills even mention improving school quality. These proposals will not ultimately save money given the costs of combining resources, while simultaneously hurting the quality of education provided in each school and negatively impacting its students and surrounding community. Given the negative impact of larger school sizes, and both decreasing administrator and community engagement that these bills would create, each proposal would erode the quality and the character of our local schools, and hence the quality of our town.

In support of my comments, cite the July 9, 2018 local report (see link below) regarding the K-12 School District Regionalization in Greater Hartford, which warns that “K-12 regionalization can actually increase costs and harm educational outcomes.”

http://ctbythenumbers.info/2018/07/09/k-12-school-district-regionalization-may-do-more-harm-than-good-analysis-finds/?fbclid=IwAR3w7VSqvmbsG_Cpc7uj3yQkuCUb4c7AYJnQPm2GqMbR16J5dZ11kM26wC0

These bills would also significantly negatively impact property values in each town, which would negatively impact the CT economy. The negative impact of these bills would also prevent

people who are considering moving to CT (for a quality public education for their children), while also giving people who are considering moving out of CT, another very strong reason to do so.

I hope you will oppose SB 738, SB 457, SB 874, SB 7150 and any other legislation that opens the door to forced regionalization of Connecticut public schools.

Clem Garcia

Darien resident