

February 26, 2019

To whom it may concern,

As a parent of public school students, I strongly oppose SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874 and any other bill that opens the door to forced regionalization of Connecticut Public Schools.

Three years ago, we moved to Ridgefield for the schools, and existing school quality is what keeps us here. My husband does a 45 minutes commute to his office so that our kids can go to a high quality education system as the one we found in here. We live in a town that founds its economic strength in its education system, and a regionalization of Connecticut Public Schools will jeopardize this.

The report prepared for the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, *K-12 Regionalization in Connecticut: Pros, Cons and Surprises* states that "Regionalization of school districts does not always lead to reductions in expenditures – neither short-term nor long-term. While there is no single one-size- to-all answer on school size and educational achievement, well resourced and academically rigorous small schools have the potential to create an environment for improved education outcomes. Large schools are seen as not welcoming to either parents or students." The study concludes "policies that call for wholesale regionalization based on imposed criteria (e.g., minimum/maximum number of students) can have unpredictable, and often adverse, consequences."

Furthermore, none of these bills include even one mention of school quality, which must be a priority in any school district. The idea of regionalization erodes the quality and the character of our local schools, which erodes the quality of our town.

Speaking in particular on the bill proposed by Governor Lamont (S.B. 874) the proposed bill requests the creation of a study on the impact of regionalizing smaller Connecticut school districts. As cited above, such study already exists so, why should we spend resources (time and money) on another one?

For the reasons stated above, 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.

Martha Huitron
Ridgefield, CT