

February 28, 2019

Re: SB 457, SB 738 and SB 874

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 and SB 874.

I am concerned that these bills will be detrimental to the education of our children. I am a parent of two children in the Wolcott school district. One is a freshman at Wolcott High School and the other is a 6<sup>th</sup> grader at Tyrell Middle School. I grew up in Wolcott, but in High School relocated with my father's job to South Carolina. When I finished college, I knew I wanted to come back to Wolcott. I loved the town.

When I started my family, I knew I wanted to have my children attend school in Wolcott because it is a small town. I wanted a smaller school population so my kids would have an opportunity to build good relationships with their teachers and not have large class sizes.

As it is now, the class sizes are starting to get larger in my town and I can see some challenges my son is facing by those changes. I am concerned that the changes outlined in these bills would increase class size and cause a decline in his education.

While I understand everyone is trying to address the budget challenges we have in our state, I do not believe these bills are a viable solution address that problem. By forcing districts to consolidate, school sizes are going to swell and in the long run I fear that students will get lost along the way. Teacher to student ratios are already too high in our state, I can't imagine how much more this would increase.

Teachers are working very hard to follow what each student's learning ability is within the class today. With everything they have to do to teach to meet new standards, we can't just increase the class size and decrease their support and expect great things.

To say that regionalization will allow for administration to be collapsed is an unrealistic expectation. It will look good on paper, but when you try to have less resources run a district two times its size, things are bound to get lost and/or services are going to get downgraded.

We have to remember that we are not building widgets and we are not some big corporation that needs to be consolidated. This is the education of our children being put in jeopardy. We need to let town and local boards determine what is best for their constituents and students.

Thank you again for hearing my testimony. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

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