



State of Connecticut

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MEMBER

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GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

Education Committee

February 28, 2019

Testimony in Opposition of:

S.B. 738, An Act Concerning The Creation Of Regional School Districts.

S.B. 457, An Act Concerning The Size Of School Districts.

S.B. 874, An Act Concerning Education Initiatives And Services In Connecticut.

Co-Chairs Sanchez, and McCrory; Vice Chairs, Barry and Abrams; Ranking Members McCarty and Berthel; and distinguished members of the Education Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in opposition of The Creation of Regional School Districts.

These proposals would lead to Connecticut's school districts moving away from local autonomy for state control. In doing so, there would be a lack of local influence leading to our school districts being out of touch and unrepresentative of their student bodies.

While I am not opposed to a voluntary regionalization when it is best suited by two (or more) school districts agreeing to share their resources; I am opposed to a mandated regionalization as it would further broaden the scope of Connecticut's State Government while reducing the interactions our municipalities have with their citizens. With no previous studies having been conducted, there is no fiscal evidence that this legislation would save our taxpayers money or improve student performance. Children are not cut from cookie-cutter molds; instead, they learn and develop at different paces and manners. Regulating the education of our state's children at the state level would take away the delicate attention our municipalities are able to provide their school districts and families.

I am greatly concerned when it comes to the language in S.B.738. My first worry can be found in section (3) of the proposal where it mentions this legislation becoming effective state-wide for the school year commencing July 1, 2021 if such plan has not been approved by the General Assembly and signed into law on or before July 1, 2020. Secondly, I firmly believe school districts should not be punished via a decrease in any kind of funding should they decide to not conform to the proposed regionalization. I would like to encourage the committee to consider striking section (3) of this proposal while including language that guarantees regionalization would not be forced upon our school districts. Lastly, adopting language to require any recommendations from the commission to seek approval from the General Assembly would allow for a more representative body to impart influence on any potential changes occurring to Connecticut's school systems.

I appreciate you taking the time to consider my testimony and would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have moving forward.