

**Senate Bill 457 AN ACT CONCERNING THE SIZE OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS-** Requires any school district with a student population of fewer than two thousand students to join a new or an existing regional school district until that district equals two thousand or more.

**Senate Bill 738 AN ACT CONCERNING THE CREATION OF REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS-** Requires towns to join state-created regional school districts similar in size to the state's Probate Districts.

**Governor's Bill SB 874 AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATION INITIATIVES AND SERVICES IN CONNECTICUT**

I don't even know where to start with what a colossally bad idea the above bills are. It seems incredibly short sighted and poorly thought out. Suffice it to say at the end of the day it will be the students and teachers that will suffer if these bills pass. I know firsthand the difference between a local school and a large regional school has made to my children and their education. In the large regional school (just like the ones you are proposing) my children were just bodies. They also had to travel almost an hour to and an hour from school every day. We were lucky to move to a small town and school district. My kids became people to the teachers and administration. I watched my oldest child blossom and flourish in this environment. He was a totally different kid than he had been in the large regional school.

To paint the entire state with the same broad brush, to make all small school districts consolidate, will do more damage than any cost savings that could possibly be reaped. Requiring all schools adhere to these proposals will irrevocable damage the fabric of many small towns in this state.

We live in a state that needs to maintain and even create more jobs. We need to boost our economy. If you start closing scores of local schools you not only hurt the local economy, but also the jobs that those school provide. You will not need all the teachers that are currently employed, or the office staff, maintenance and grounds staff. We will be left with large empty buildings that will become run down and derelict. The schools that do survive will need to be expanded or new ones built all together to accommodate the new student population. Where is the cost savings there?

I cannot see any upside to requiring perfectly sustained local schools districts to consolidate into large regional schools. This is not why I chose to move to Connecticut in the first place and not why I moved out of a large regional school district, in the second.

The students will be the ones to suffer. We are ranked #3 in education by Forbes. We have a highly educated population. We have always prided ourselves on our education. What is being proposed will have a decidedly detrimental effect on the education of our children. Looks at the states where this is how their education is run, like a factory not a school, and see where they rank. We are not thinking of our children, our communities or our future with this type of system.

And how will this be implemented? Are you really going to ask students to move school their senior year? To move from all that has been safe and familiar to a school that could be upwards of 5 times the size of the school they are coming from? Again, I say it is the students that will suffer under your factory approach to education.

Sincerely,

Louise Montville