

February 28, 2019

To: edtestimony@cga.ct.gov
Cc: Devin.Carney@housegop.ct.gov
Subject: AGAINST SB 739 and SB 874

Good Morning,

I am writing to voice my opinion against SB 739 and SB 874.
The idea that it will somehow save money has **no merit**.

Other states that function with large county school systems, such as is proposed, end up with enormous districts that actually cost the taxpayer more money due to the sheer size of the organizations and the numerous layers of bureaucracy that are required to run them.

Of greatest concern is the idea that we will lose our small local schools which are vitally important to the success of our students.

Students could be forced to endure **lengthy bus rides, attend massive schools where they lose personal connection with their teachers**, and our communities will no longer have the ability to manage the education of our children.

Districts across the state, ours included, already engage in regional services that save money.

To force this initiative upon our schools based on arbitrary enrollment and population numbers is foolish and short-sighted.

We are not opposed to the idea of regionalizing services, and in fact do so in many areas, **but are opposed to the idea of the state mandating this with no data to support their actions.**

As Representative Carney notes below, "Forced regionalization could also harm our property values and quality of life." Many of our residents have chosen to move to our towns because of their small size. **The Governor's proposal stands in contrast to the desire of those residents to live in a community that has that "small-town America" feel.** The idea of local control is a concept that is rooted in our New England heritage.

In closing, I urge you to vote AGAINST SB 739 and SB 874.

Sincerely,
Kristine E. Pekar
Music Department Leader, Regional School District #18