

To the Education Committee,

RE: SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874

In recent years, businesses have left Connecticut at an alarming rate. One of the primary defenses cited by those either in public office or aspiring to it, targets improving post-secondary school educations, thus producing the talent businesses want, attracting them back to Connecticut.

The most important prerequisite for *post*-secondary education is the completion of *secondary* school.

SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874, do not even aspire to improve outcomes rather improve financial efficiency. The financial efficiency claims are fabrications, for any consolidation above the tiniest of districts, and even those, take a decade or more to realize. In the meantime, communities lose their identities and connections to each other; and when district sizes balloon beyond their currently efficient dimensions, or in some case already bloated size, educational outcomes deteriorate. Parents become less involved. Students become more disadvantaged, leading to poorer outcomes. These poorer outcomes are not going to attract top-tier companies and top-tier jobs, sparking a downward economic spiral, out of which, there may be no return for the state of Connecticut.

The best way to save money is to improve educational outcomes. The US Department of Education has determined that, on average, every child that fails to graduate from high school, equates to a lifetime societal burden of **\$250,000** – each and every one.

I encourage the Education Committee to look to improve educational outcomes, not penny-wise and pound-foolish totalitarian tactics.

Thank you for your consideration,

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