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Subject: Opposition to SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to inform you that I stand in adamant opposition to SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874. All three of these bills call for forced regionalization, which I do not feel would benefit our children, our schools, our teachers, our curriculum, or our state. I feel that they do a disservice to all involved with our schools and especially our children, our state's future.

I have my bachelor's of science in Elementary Education and Economics from Vanderbilt University and my master's in Teaching Social Studies from Teachers College, Columbia University. I have taught in regionalized school districts and small, local schools, public schools and private. Based on my experience as a teacher in regionalized school districts, I feel that the size and scope of a regionalized school district is not able meet the needs of the students as well as a smaller school district. In a smaller school district, the needs of individual students can be met in a better, more appropriate way than in a broad, regionalized school district.

Forcing school districts to regionalize will remove the oversight and decision-making for schools to people more removed from what is going on in the classroom. This makes education less personal, less meaningful, and less effective. All students, communities, and schools are different and should be treated as such. Regionalized school districts lead to watered-down expectations for students, increased school sizes, less parent involvement, and more bureaucracy. It results in longer travel times for students, which in turn leads to less time learning. Enabling towns to maintain control of their local school districts enables more effective use of monetary resources, more effective teaching, and more parent and community involvement; all of which benefits our state's children and taxpayers.

In Connecticut, our schools are the heart of our communities. I believe that these bills will impact Connecticut communities, towns, cities, and the state negatively. I oppose these bills and ask that the leaders of our state also oppose SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874.

Sincerely,

Anne Skibitcky