

Email To: edtestimony@cga.ct.gov

Copies to: Governor Lamont, Senator Looney, Senator Duff, Chairs and Members of the Education Committee, Senator Haskell, Senator Bergstein, Representative O'Dea, and Representative Dathan

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

February 28, 2018

Dear Connecticut Elected Representatives:

As a parent of three public school students that attended New Canaan Public Schools K-12, and a previous eight-year member of the New Canaan Public Schools Board of Education, I strongly oppose SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874 and any other bill that opens the door to forced regionalization of Connecticut Public Schools.

My husband and I moved to New Canaan 26 years ago for the quality of the schools. We believe that the quality of our schools contributes strongly to the quality of our town. Regionalization jeopardizes the accomplishments of schools such as those in New Canaan for questionable cost savings. As a former member of the Board of Education, I am well aware of the school quality issues that arise when high student to teacher or high student to administrator ratios exist. Eroding school quality (none of the proposed bills mention school quality) is certainly not in the interests of our state, where we need to educate our students to be college and career ready for the 21st century workforce.

In addition, in cases where regionalization occurs, collective bargaining agreements between the two districts for teachers would likely be combined and moved to the higher cost platform, wiping out any potential administrative cost savings.

I also believe that local School Boards are better equipped to make the decisions locally that will benefit each school. Local control of education is paramount.

I hope you share my concerns and will oppose SB 738, SB 457, SB 874, and any other legislation that opens the door to forced regionalization of Connecticut public schools.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kathryn A. Smith
New Canaan