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Jeffrey K. Sommer of Kensington, CT 06037

*Chairmen McCrory and Sanchez, Ranking Members Berthel and McCarty, and esteemed members of the Education Committee, thank you for allowing me to submit testimony on SB 457, SB 738 and SB 874*

I'm Jeff Sommer of 15 Sterling Dr. Kensington, CT and I'm writing this letter so I can voice my concerns for merging Berlin & New Britain School systems.

When buying a home, most research the school district ahead of doing so. This is a huge factor in deciding where to raise our families. By merging these school districts, you're shaking and breaking down that entire foundation. People including myself pay much more money to our towns in the value of our home & taxes so our children go to schools with reviews we're comfortable with. Teachers are not necessarily my greatest concern as much as the company my children will be mixed with. Children become their environment & towns have solid lines separating that. This will erase those lines removing any control one has to where they want their family to live. The value of our homes will decrease when being mixed with a lower income average towns just to name a secondary effect besides the safety & future of our children's well being which is our primary concern. We all know how important it is to be raised in a loving healthy home and so that is where I'm coming from. It doesn't matter your race or ethnicity but more so your upbringing & values. Our town stats reflect that criteria & that is the main reason I'm opposed to this. Good towns hold good values citizens, this will change and not in a positive way with this school regionalization proposition.

Please reconsider this move and protect what tens of thousands of people have worked so hard to build all their lives. People will move out of towns to move to town with better districts. This will impact everything & not in a balanced way.

*Thank you again for hearing my testimony. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have*

Sincerely,

Jeffrey K. Sommer