

February 26, 2019

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

Dear Elected CT Official,

I am 48 years old and a 16 year resident of Weston, CT. I have never previously written a letter to an elected official. I am deeply disturbed by the prospect of school regionalization and strongly oppose SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874 and any other bill of this type. I am a product of attending the Pittsburgh public school system and purposely moved to our town so my children could experience a first-rate education.

According to U.S. News and World Report, our fine state ranks as follows: 14th in Education, 41st in Fiscal Stability, and 43rd in Economy. On a per capita basis, we have the 2nd highest burden of any state. I have sadly watched our state become saddled with pension liability and budget issues over the past decade. I am further dismayed by the unfriendly business environment the state has created as evidenced by countless large and small companies choosing to leave CT. The associated population statistics paint a grim picture. In short, we have a crisis.

However, as a family we enjoy living in Weston and proudly view our school system as a shining example of what works in this state. I believe we are receiving more than commensurate value as our children are receiving a foundational education which will help shape their future lives.

The legislation under consideration is a failed effort to masquerade the hard issues at hand around our economy and flawed fiscal system. Our sister state, Rhode Island, serves as a prime example of how an active Governor and legislation has tackled similar problems. This school regionalization effort is an effort by this newly elected state government to cripple smaller towns and diminish one of more attractive and viable assets of CT, a quality public education system.

Regionalization would erode this systems – all in an effort to find some administrative cost savings. The research around regionalization is not favorable as evidenced by this Seton Hall University Report - <https://scholarship.shu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2894&context=dissertations>. The fact patterns of other states and regionalization are simply not compelling.

I urge you to stand up and support our school systems. Please do not use our local towns as another version of a “piggybank” to solve the systemic issues of the state. We should be investing to improve our education system; not looking at it as “expense valve” because our politicians cannot find ways to attract thriving businesses to our state and tackle the pension liability issues.

To put in bluntly, I would strongly consider moving out of this fine state in the event this legislation were to pass. This regionalization effort would result in CT dropping in the national rankings for education and perhaps, modestly improving in terms of financial stability. This is unquestionably a “bad trade” and highlights the dysfunction of our state government. Please solve the issues of our state by making the hard choices – outside of crippling our educational system.

Sincerely,

David Tamburri

32 Alwyn Lane, Weston, CT