

Dear Education Committee,

As a parent of public school students, 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.

We moved to New Hartford with strong consideration to the educational system, and have paid our taxes knowing they support this quality.

Having a smaller school community helps our children feel a sense of community, by knowing most of their classmates and families. Larger school populations will not foster the same sense of community.

Residing in a rural town, we already belong to a regional school system, and the location of the school is a long distance (25+ minutes drive from some residences). Many parents work out of town, creating further distance from their childrens' school. The distance from home to school through regionalization will not only result in children being bused longer distances, but also create further difficulties for parents trying to be active in their childrens' schools or attend meetings.

I hope you strongly consider what would be lost- sense of community, parent-education links, time. Please seek other methods of saving dollars, not at the expense of these.

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

Debbie Viets

New Hartford, CT