Dear Chairperson McCrory, and Members of the Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my Public Comment in writing regarding:

Senate Bill 738 would regionalize schools based on the state's Probate Court Districts in a manner similar to the probate districts ...

Senate Bill 457 that "would require any school district with a student population of fewer than two thousand (2,000) students to join a new or an existing regional school district."

I strenuously object to both bills!

Firstly, as a person living in Seymour I'm here to say the SB738 on Probate Court district lines, lumping Seymour together with Woodbridge Ansonia & Derby is an arbitrary flawed notion:

- Woodbridge is already in a highly successful regionalized district. It would make no sense to arbitrarily break up a school board region that has worked for decades, just to match SB738s Probate Court district plan.

- Ansonia and Derby are already holding talks to form a regionalized school district, but Seymour would not benefit by joining with them. Just recently, events, Ansonia City and Ansonia Board of Education sued each other over mismanagement or misdirection of budget funds creating a fiscal crisis of $600,000 dollars with potentially catastrophic results. The local news reported that CT State Dept of Education had to weigh in on this issue before it was resolved. Our taxpayers potentially wind up on the hook to pay for any money Ansonia might default on shared services contracts. The fact that this recent scenario actually went to court proves them risky, and merging schools with them to be just too high of a risk factor. Moreover, If Ansonia & Derby need to combine with a third big community then those 2 districts should combine with Shelton which has a better tax revenue base to afford joining with risky Ansonia.

- Seymour's BOE school district is already doing shared services contracts with Seymour's town government. Potentially more efficiencies can be found in town and there is no need to merge schools with any other town.

- My daughter's bus ride is already long enough (20 minutes each way) across the river from our home in the northeast corner of town to Seymour Middle, through heavily commuter congested local streets, especially at the river crossing/Rt 8 on ramp area, and also that bus has arrived after the first period morning bell 15 times this year. I do NOT want her trip getting even longer by bussing kids across town lines.

Ok sooo...
Secondly, SB457 is also arbitrary with it 2,000 student threshold.

• What is the +/- variable? How will enforcement kick in? For example: What would happen if multiple families move in & out over the course of a year and enrollment goes from a hypothetical 2,015 down to 1,999 students ??? What then? What are the repercussions?

• Furthermore, Seymour currently has 2,226 students now! Yes, I checked enrollment. Does that exempt Seymour from this bill? Does that Exempt Seymour the other bill??