

First Selectman Tesoro's Statement on Three Bills concerning Regionalization of Schools in CT

February 25, 2019 - I have reviewed the three Bills concerning regionalization of schools in Connecticut and, as First Selectman of Trumbull, I am troubled by the concept of "forced" regionalization. While the concept may have some benefit in the areas of purchasing and energy, it makes little sense to compel districts to give up their autonomy in the areas of education that impact instruction and curriculum.

In Trumbull, our school system is critical to our identity as a community. Our investment in education is one that our community embraces and the success of our students is a matter of civic pride. Our strong school system supports our property values and attracts new residents to our community, bringing to us a steady stream of new ideas and energy.

While our community has divergent points of view on some issues, we are united in our desire to preserve our right to create the school system that suits the needs of our community. The success of our school system speaks for itself. Please do not fix something that is not broken.

We believe the better course of action is encouraging communities to voluntarily join forces to control costs in non-instructional areas. There already exist regional schools in Connecticut and those were accomplished without forcing those communities to do so.

We recognize that our state is in trouble and we are prepared to do our fair share; however, this concept of forced regionalization is not the answer.

This issue should be fully studied and vetted so everyone knows what regionalization means to their community including the financial, instructional, and decision making impacts.

These Bills are scheduled for a Public Hearing on Friday, March 1, 2019, at 1 p.m. at the Legislative Office Building, 300 Capitol Avenue in Hartford. If you wish to speak, sign-ups begin at 10 a.m. If you are unable to attend in person, please email your testimony to edtestimony@cga.ct.gov as a Word Document or PDF to be officially entered into the Hearing. I urge every Trumbull resident to take action.

I am including a brief summary of the three Bills that are being discussed and the names and contact information for Trumbull's State Delegation.

1. **SB 738:** SB 738 would consolidate school districts in towns with populations of fewer than 40,000. It was introduced by State Senate President Pro Tempore Martin Looney (D-11). https://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/cgabillstatus/cgabillstatus.asp?selBillType=Bill&bill_num=SB-738
2. **SB 457:** SB 457, sponsored by Senate Majority Leader Bob Duff (D-25), would require any school district with a student population of fewer than 2,000 students to join a new or an existing regional school district. https://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/cgabillstatus/cgabillstatus.asp?selBillType=Bill&bill_num=SB-457
3. **SB 874:** SB 874 calls for the appointment of a Commission of Shared School Services, which will have until December 2020 to come forward with a recommendation after studying all the school districts in the state. https://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/cgabillstatus/cgabillstatus.asp?selBillType=Bill&bill_num=SB-874

Testimony: All testimony about the bills should be emailed to edtestimony@cga.ct.gov. All three bill numbers, SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874, should go in the subject line, and should be repeated in the body

of the email, along with the constituent's name and town. Testimony and comments can be sent up to the day before the hearing.

Trumbull's State Delegation

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