

REFERENDUM REQUEST  
FROM RESIDENTS OF REGION 14 TO BOARD OF EDUCATION

Dear Region 14 Board of Education,

On March 26, 1968 the town meetings of both Bethlehem and Woodbury voted unanimously to form a temporary regional school study committee to study the advisability of establishing a regional school district. The committee released its report in April of 1968; the document was circulated throughout the two communities and subsequently voted on in the 1968 referendum vote that formed the Regional School District 14.

On page one of the plan, the 1968 Temporary Regional School Study Committee Report outlined a series of recommendations. Above all, the committee recommended that the towns of Woodbury and Bethlehem form a regional school district to include grades kindergarten through twelve. But perhaps just as significantly, they made a series of recommendations as to how the region should be configured. Recommendations two and three read as follows:

That grades kindergarten through twelve be divided into elementary schools (grades K through 5), a middle school (grades 6 through 8), and a high school (grades 9 through 12).

That grades K through 5 be housed in elementary school buildings in Bethlehem and Woodbury.

The Connecticut Supreme Court, in *Mary Atwood, et al v. Regional School District No. 15*, held that the terms of a regionalization plan consist of the recommendations found in the final report. In other words, the recommendations outlined above are part of the 1968 regionalization plan that formed Regional School District 14. The court has also held and state statute 10-47(c) provides that any fundamental amendment to such plan must be done via a referendum vote either brought by the regional school board itself or the "legislative body" of one of the two towns. *Atwood* appears to be the only Connecticut appellate law on point, and is particularly significant given the present circumstances in Region 14.

On October 16<sup>th</sup>, the Region 14 Board of Education voted to implement a reconfiguration plan for Woodbury and Bethlehem. This consolidation of our elementary schools mandates that grades K-2 from both towns will attend the Bethlehem 'Primary' School and grades 3-5 from both towns will attend Mitchell 'Intermediate' in Woodbury. This would seem to be in direct violation of the recommendations presented in the 1968 plan, and as such begs the question as to whether or not reconfiguration is a fundamental change to the 1968 regionalization plan thus requiring the board to seek approval from the two communities via a referendum vote.

Given the obvious legal questions, concerned citizens of both Bethlehem and Woodbury have forwarded this information to the Bethlehem and Woodbury Board of Selectmen. At the request of these same citizens, the town leaders of Bethlehem have sought the advice of their legal counsel. In his legal opinion regarding the question of reconfiguration, Attorney Rybak has stated that "It is unfortunate that the Region 14 Board of Education did not decide to submit the question to a district wide referendum." He has further stated that "A realignment of grades and students within a single town district is certainly a board of education matter, but within the context of a multi-town regional school district, the question takes on greater significance . . ."

Attorney Rybak also stated that "it is not clear whether the Region 14 school reconfiguration plan is indeed a 'fundamental change' to the original plan of regionalization and therefore subject to referendum . . . or whether the realignment is a matter exclusively within the authority and statutory obligation of the Regional 14 Board of Education, as maintained by its counsel." The attorney's conclusion is that "[i]t is a close question which only a court can ultimately answer."

It is our position that any statutory powers granted to Regional 14 Board of Education must be viewed within the parameters of the original 1968 regionalization plan that formed and subsequently granted the board those same powers. As such, any major decisions/policy changes by this board must be executed within the broad parameters defined by the recommendations of that same plan. As for the question as to whether or not this is a fundamental change, it is quite clear that the reconfiguration plan directly violates both the second and third recommendations of the 1968 plan. Furthermore, in a recent letter to the editor, Theodore H. Martland, Superintendent of the Woodbury Public Schools in 1968 and one

of the authors of the 1968 regionalization plan, has publicly stated that the committee's intent was to have a K-5 school in both Woodbury and Bethlehem.

Given the legal ambiguity that surrounds the Board's decision and the community outcry that has followed, we urge the Board of Education to take the reconfiguration plan to referendum. If the Board is concerned with the long term viability of the reconfiguration plan and the long term health of the region, they will submit the question to the people to decide. The citizens of Bethlehem and Woodbury have had ample time to consider this issue—both communities are well poised to make an educated decision as to whether or not this plan is in the long-term best interests of these two communities. If the people of Bethlehem and Woodbury support this plan, a referendum will give the Board the mandate it needs to fairly move forward with reconfiguration. If not, the Board will be better positioned to represent the interests of the communities they serve.

Sincerely,

Jason Ambruso, Woodbury  
Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Aquilar, Woodbury  
Patricia Aquilar, Woodbury  
Holly Baider, Woodbury  
Scott Baider, Woodbury  
Helga Baker, Bethlehem  
Donald Baker, Bethlehem  
Lisa Bambino, Woodbury  
Anthony Bambino, Woodbury  
Erica Barber, Woodbury  
William J. Barber, Woodbury  
Mary Barkal, Bethlehem  
John Barkal, Bethlehem  
Joan Arlindo Barros, Woodbury  
Theresa Basile, Bethlehem  
Rich Basile, Bethlehem  
Shannon Bauer, Bethlehem  
George Bauer, Bethlehem  
Jen Berger, Woodbury  
Rich Berger, Woodbury  
Cecile Bernard, Bethlehem  
Jean Betteridge, Woodbury  
Paige Blackburn, Woodbury  
David Blackburn Jr., Woodbury  
Ellen Bleu, Woodbury  
Cynthia Boisits, Woodbury  
Edward Boisits, Woodbury  
Evelyn C. Boucher, Woodbury  
Rosie Brancato, Woodbury  
Vincent Brancato, Woodbury  
Carl Braun, Woodbury  
Ericka Brayton, Bethlehem  
Thomas L. Brayton III, Bethlehem  
Al Brazauskas, Woodbury  
Shirley Brazauskas, Woodbury  
Wendy Brazauskas, Woodbury  
Matt Brazauskas, Woodbury  
Melissa Brogna, Woodbury  
Rico Brogna, Woodbury  
Amanda Brooks, Woodbury  
Doreen Brooks, Bethlehem  
Jim Brooks, Bethlehem  
Carol Ann Brown, Bethlehem  
Eileen Budrewicz, Woodbury  
Tim Budrewicz, Woodbury  
Kimberly Burns, Woodbury  
Richard Burns, Woodbury

Donna Bushka, Woodbury  
Eric Bushka, Woodbury  
Rita Calvano, Woodbury  
Kathryn Campbell, Bethlehem  
Shawn Campbell, Bethlehem  
Alexis Chacchia, Woodbury  
Marchello Chacchia, Woodbury  
James Chappuis, Woodbury  
Suzanne Charette, Woodbury  
Donald Charette, Woodbury  
Cassandra Cheatham, Woodbury  
Matthew Cheatham, Woodbury  
Dawn Ciappetta, Bethlehem  
John Ciappetta, Bethlehem  
Marion Ciarlo, Woodbury  
Brett Ciarlo, Woodbury  
Lynne Classey, Woodbury  
Tim Classey, Woodbury  
Isabel Clemens, Woodbury  
Michael Clemens, Woodbury  
Mary Clifford, Woodbury  
Sean Clifford, Woodbury  
Lisa Codianna, Bethlehem  
Louis Codianna, Jr., Bethlehem  
Carol Cole, Bethlehem  
Tom Cole, Bethlehem  
Judy Coniglio, Woodbury  
Joe Coniglio, Woodbury  
Bill Conroy, Woodbury  
Francine Contento, Woodbury  
Anthony Contento, Woodbury  
Jim Conway, Woodbury  
Connie Conway, Woodbury  
Elizabeth L. Crocco, Bethlehem  
Joseph R. Crocco, Bethlehem  
Michael Culkin, Woodbury  
Stephen C. Cunningham, Woodbury  
Linda Dabkowski, Bethlehem  
Ted Dabkowski, Bethlehem  
Melissa M. Danaher, Woodbury  
John R. Danaher, Woodbury  
Sylvia Davidowitz, Woodbury  
Jay Davidowitz, Woodbury  
Christine DeCicco, Woodbury  
Anthony DeCicco, Woodbury  
Nick Deltorto, Bethlehem  
Jennifer DeRosa, Bethlehem  
Vincent DeRosa, Bethlehem  
Valerie DiLorenzo, Bethlehem  
Steve DiLorenzo, Bethlehem  
Ann DiSarro, Woodbury  
Patrick DiSarro, Woodbury  
Edith D'Occhio, Bethlehem  
William D'Occhio, Bethlehem  
Erin Doohan-Fortuna, Bethlehem  
Mark Drost, Bethlehem  
Andrea Duggan, Woodbury  
Marc Duncan, Woodbury  
Maria Duncan, Woodbury  
Lucia Dunham, Woodbury  
Glen Dunham, Woodbury  
John Eastwood, Woodbury

Debbie Eschmann, Woodbury  
Steve Eschmann, Woodbury  
Cornelia Field, Woodbury  
Jeff Field, Woodbury  
Brandi Fitzgerald, Bethlehem  
Mike Fitzgerald, Bethlehem  
Lynn Frederick, Woodbury  
Nathalie Gaggini, Woodbury  
Lorenzo Gaggini, Woodbury  
Kim Gaiette, Woodbury  
Richard Gaiette, Woodbury  
Janice Ganetsky, Bethlehem  
Glenn Ganetsky, Bethlehem  
Patrice Gans, Woodbury  
Amy M. Garceau, Bethlehem  
Mark Garceau, Bethlehem  
Rita Gaudioso, Woodbury  
Pamela Gengenbach, Woodbury  
Kurt Gengenbach, Woodbury  
Bette Geraci, Woodbury  
Joe Louis Geraci, Woodbury  
Joseph R. Geraci, Woodbury  
Earl and Cindy Gillette, Woodbury  
Stephanie Gonillo, Bethlehem  
Arthur Graff, Woodbury  
Lori Grant, Woodbury  
Shane Grant, Woodbury  
Mr. and Mrs. Sawyer Grayson, Woodbury  
Jeffrey S. Greene, Woodbury  
Elizabeth Griswold, Bethlehem  
Scott Griswold, Bethlehem  
Cathleen Guldán, Woodbury  
John Guldán, Woodbury  
Barbara Hamilton, Woodbury  
Patrice A. Hamilton, Esq., Woodbury  
Lisa Hanggi, Woodbury  
Joseph Hanggi Jr., Woodbury  
Katheryn Hansel, Woodbury  
Diane Hardt, Bethlehem  
Jeanette Hassinger, Woodbury  
Ken Hatstat, Woodbury  
Suzanne Hess, Woodbury  
John Hess, Woodbury  
Jennifer Higgins, Woodbury  
Ky Higgins, Woodbury  
Diane Hill, Bethlehem  
Patrick Hill, Bethlehem  
George Hoffman, Bethlehem  
Tamara Hoffman, Bethlehem  
Audra Hokunson, Woodbury  
F.W. Holzbaur, Woodbury  
Kathleen DeLuca Hoyt, Woodbury  
Ron Hoyt, Woodbury  
Christine T. Huhn, Woodbury  
Gregory F. Huhn, Woodbury  
Darlene Everitt-Jacovino, Bethlehem  
Michael S. Jacovino, Bethlehem  
Bill Joyce and Mary Paul, Bethlehem  
Mariclare DeFazio-Keenan, Woodbury  
William P. Keenan Jr., Woodbury  
Leigh Kachur, Bethlehem  
Bryan Kachur, Bethlehem

Jennifer Kern, Bethlehem  
William Kern, Bethlehem  
Aimee Kent, Woodbury  
Bob Kent, Woodbury  
Joann King, Woodbury  
David Kirk, Woodbury  
Erik Kitik, Woodbury  
Janice Kolesnik, Woodbury  
Robert Kolesnik Sr., Woodbury  
Mary Kolesnik, Woodbury  
Robert Kolesnik, Jr. Woodbury  
Denise Kolitsas, Woodbury  
Kostandinos Kolitsas, Woodbury  
Lynne Kozak, Bethlehem  
Scott Kozak, Bethlehem  
Mary Ellen Kunz, Woodbury  
Greg Kunz, Woodbury  
Sadie Kunz, Woodbury  
David Lamanna, Woodbury  
Jennifer Landry, Woodbury  
Michael Landry, Woodbury  
Elizabeth Norton Lasley, Woodbury  
William Lasley Jr., Woodbury  
Agatha Lassauze, Bethlehem  
Liz Lavorgna, Woodbury  
Cheryl Leveille, Bethlehem  
Joe Leveille, Bethlehem  
Marcy Levesque, Bethlehem  
Jeff Levesque, Bethlehem  
Amy Levy, Woodbury  
Steven Levy, Woodbury  
Ben Levy, Woodbury  
Adrian Lewis, Woodbury  
Debra J. Lewis, Woodbury  
Geoffrey D. Lewis, Woodbury  
Guy Lewis, Woodbury  
Debra Lindberg, Woodbury  
John Lindberg, Woodbury  
Stephanie Lo, Bethlehem  
Denny Lo, Bethlehem  
Brenda Longo, Woodbury  
Ed Longo, Woodbury  
Suzanne Lovig, Woodbury  
Gretchen Lucera, Woodbury  
John Lucera, Woodbury  
Liane Maeder, Woodbury  
Ann Mandelbaum, Woodbury  
Wayne Mattox and Kathleen Dowd, Woodbury  
Liz May, Bethlehem  
Richard May, Bethlehem  
Ted Martland, Woodbury  
Ingrid Martland, Woodbury  
Caroline Maschio, Woodbury  
Laurent Maschio, Woodbury  
Candace Meyer, Woodbury  
Karl A. Meyer, Woodbury  
Richard H. Michaels, Woodbury  
Laurie J. Michaels, Woodbury  
Paul D. Miller, Bethlehem  
Judith Miller, Bethlehem  
Carina Booker, 9<sup>th</sup> grade NHS  
Jacqueline Miller, 10<sup>th</sup> grade NHS

Joseph Miller, Kindergarten BES  
Dinesh Mistry, Woodbury  
Andrea B. Moran, Woodbury  
Sean P. Moran, Woodbury  
Sarah Moran, Woodbury  
Thomas Moran, Woodbury  
David W. Mott, Woodbury  
Elsie E. Mott, Woodbury  
Jack Nelson, Woodbury  
Pam Nole, Bethlehem  
Robert Nole, Bethlehem  
Kenneth Notti, Woodbury  
Tracy Olmsted, Woodbury  
Lynn O'Neil, Bethlehem  
Mickey O'Neil, Bethlehem  
Donna Ouellette, Woodbury  
Paul Ouellette, Woodbury  
Scott O'Keefe, Woodbury  
Robin Oldakowski, Bethlehem  
Stephen Oldakowski, Bethlehem  
Brandie Palumbo, Woodbury  
John Palumbo, Woodbury  
Heather Palmer, Woodbury  
Bob Palmer, Woodbury  
Hailey Palmer, Woodbury  
Alyssa Palmer, Woodbury  
Jessie Palmer, Woodbury  
Karen Pape, Woodbury  
Jack Pape, Woodbury  
Chris Pearce, Woodbury  
Carl Pearce, Woodbury  
Xavier Pedroza, Woodbury  
Jacob Pedroza, 6th grade WMS  
Alexandra Pedroza, 6th grade WMS  
Ian Pedroza, 5th grade WMS  
Jasper Pedroza, 1st grade MES  
Abby Peklo, Woodbury  
Andrew Peklo, Woodbury  
Karen Petillo, Woodbury  
Anthony Petillo, Woodbury  
Laura Porcelli, Woodbury  
Doug Porcelli, Woodbury  
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Porcelli, Woodbury  
Charlotte Pratt, Bethlehem  
John Pratt, Bethlehem  
Diane Przyloski, Woodbury  
Walter Przyloski, Woodbury  
Pamela Racevicius, Woodbury  
Peter Racevicius, Woodbury  
Marie Racevicius, Woodbury  
Harold Racevicius, Woodbury  
Dana Reelick, Woodbury  
Robert Reelick, Woodbury  
Maureen Renkun, Woodbury  
Cass Renkun, Woodbury  
Cliff Ritter, Woodbury  
Deborah Rising, Woodbury  
Benjamin Rising, Woodbury  
Paul Rodai, Woodbury  
Kit Rogers, Woodbury  
Sarah Rudzavice, Bethlehem  
Jim Rudzavice, Bethlehem

Michele Rupe, Bethlehem  
Steve Rupe, Bethlehem  
Barbara Salerno, Bethlehem  
Lewis Salerno, Bethlehem  
Joy Savulak, Woodbury  
Stephen Savulak, Woodbury  
Melissa Scalzo, Woodbury  
Jonathan Scalzo, Woodbury  
Sue Scherff, Bethlehem  
Gerry Schuster, Bethlehem  
Ralph Schuster, Bethlehem  
Kelly Shamansky, Woodbury  
John Shamansky, Woodbury  
John A. Sherer, Woodbury  
Katy Sherer, Woodbury  
Frank A. Sherer, Jr., Woodbury  
Kim Sibilia, Bethlehem  
Peter Sibilia, Bethlehem  
Larry J. Smotroff, Woodbury  
Judi Sordi, Bethlehem  
Frank Sordi, Bethlehem  
Steve Sordi, Bethlehem  
Barbara Sorosiak, Woodbury  
Mark Sorosiak, Woodbury  
Sandra Spezzano, Woodbury  
John Spezzano, Woodbury  
Sharisse Steiner, Bethlehem  
Lee Steiner, Bethlehem  
Molly Stevens, Woodbury  
Burton Stevens, Woodbury  
Mrs. Faith K. Stewart, Woodbury  
Rhonda Stokes, Woodbury  
Joan K. Stomski, Woodbury  
Gerald D. Stomski, Woodbury  
Kirsten H. Stone, Woodbury  
Thomas L. Stone, Woodbury  
Susan Suhr, Woodbury  
Coleen Sullivan, Woodbury  
Kurt Sullivan, Woodbury  
Deb Szymanski, Woodbury  
Jessica Thomas, Woodbury  
Dolores Thorne, Woodbury  
Ann Thurlow, Woodbury  
Steve Thurlow, Woodbury  
Debbie Tietz and Mark Leonard, Woodbury  
Jodie Timm, Bethlehem  
Jason Timm, Bethlehem  
Douglas B. Tolles - Bethlehem  
Lisa Torres, Woodbury  
Victor Torres, Woodbury  
Gayle Torto, Woodbury  
Bonnie Vail, Bethlehem  
John Vail, Bethlehem  
Marina Vale, Woodbury  
Vicki Valente, Bethlehem  
Jeff Valente, Bethlehem  
Martha Varnum, Woodbury  
Randy Varnum, Woodbury  
Betty Jane Vitigliano, Woodbury  
Tom Vitigliano, Woodbury  
Laurie Wagner, Bethlehem  
David R. Wagner, Woodbury

Arlene Wilkas, Woodbury  
Toni Wilkas, Woodbury  
Jared Wilkas, Woodbury  
Mitzi Wilkes, Bethlehem  
Mark Wilkes, Bethlehem  
Kelli Willis, Woodbury  
Bob Willis, Woodbury  
Kathi Winegard, Woodbury  
Derek Winegard, Woodbury  
Howard Winston, Woodbury  
Richard Winus, Woodbury  
Jane Witherwax, Woodbury  
Jeffrey Witherwax, Woodbury  
Renee Wojtczak, Woodbury  
Joe Wojtczak, Woodbury  
Karen Woodward, Woodbury  
Todd Woodward, Woodbury  
Linda Woodward, Woodbury  
Thomas Woodward, Woodbury  
Karen Wolff, Woodbury  
Ron Wolff, Woodbury  
Suzanne Yanielli, Bethlehem  
Michael Yanielli, Bethlehem  
Justyn Zitnay, Bethlehem