

I'm honored to be able to provide testimony on H.886 with the perspective of having served as a school board director for 15 years, on the City Charter Committee and most recently, as an elected member of South Burlington's City Council.

As a former school board member, I worked with five former colleagues to author the letter dated 11/2/22 which you have received highlighting support to the Council and City Charter committee for expanding school board representation in an effort to reflect the increasingly complex needs of our growing city that demand time, diverse expertise and viewpoints, community input and taxpayer support.

Four school districts and 3 supervisory unions in Chittenden County were benchmarked at the time for student enrollment, budget size, number of facilities, and number of Board members along with a county average with and without the SU's.

Role and responsibilities of the Board were articulated by people who had been elected into those positions and compared and contrasted with past experience, current and emerging needs, and the practical impact of diverse representation to be included based on available time, work/life experience, and the potential to ensure robust onboarding of new members by maintaining institutional expertise on the Board.

The Charter Committee was delegated to consider this Board expansion along with other aspects of governance in South Burlington.

Ultimately, this ballot item passed with about 80% in favor of Board expansion, while maintaining at-large representation.

South Burlington has scheduled its' third budget vote for May 7th. The opportunity for enhanced community advocacy and engagement is a further benefit of an expended Board. Additionally, school representation on City council-sponsored committees where there are overlapping goals may be desirable, as it was with the City Charter committee, representing another demand on School Board member's time and expertise.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I'd be happy to respond to any questions you may have.

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