

I am a PK teacher in the Northeast Kingdom. I am well aware of the “two Vermonts” identified recently by our leadership and known for generations by those of us who have been born and bred in these communities. Here we are following the trend in our nation: the disparities now are starker than ever. I know the “two Vermonts”--they arrive at our school every day.

I was present at the House Ed Committee testimony delivered by Jill Stahl Tyler Friday 1/25/19.

I am dismayed that the revisionist history she provided on “Law abiding” towns vs. “those who are not following the law” was not challenged and was possibly accepted by Committee members.

ACT 46 LAW PROVIDED AN ALTERNATIVE Governance Structure (AGS).

Thus, contrary to Tyler’s testimony, scores of school board members in small communities around the state put, in good faith as law followers, countless and undoubtedly thousands of hours, all told into submitting alternative governance structures to both comply with Act 46 law and to also provide what they deem is best for their communities. They did so because in these communities, where the “TWO VERMONTS” live and breathe and co-exist with each other at a human and interactive scale, these volunteer leaders recognize disparity and strive to ameliorate it via their dedication to public schools-the great equalizer. Their dedication to access, quality, and opportunity should not be categorized as “law breaking.” Please do not accept this frame put forth by Tyler.

As you may know, the AGSs were not considered an iota before the SBE imposed mergers anyhow. I hope you will also solicit testimony from those involved in creating and submitting an AGS.

A moratorium is needed now so all can consider and hopefully respond to and ameliorate the likely consequences of the State Board of Education’s forced merger policy, which in my view will further perpetuate--NOT solve-- inequality in our state.

Anne Molleur Hanson

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