

**Testimony of Paul Forlenza to the Senate Education Committee
about H.727, especially the withdrawal sections, April 15, 2022**

- Paul Forlenza – Lincoln Selectboard – also Selectboard Liaison to Save Community Schools (SCS), group leading the effort for Lincoln to withdraw from MAUSD
- Thank you for including me in your discussion of H.727 today.
- I enjoyed listening to Tim Dumont yesterday. I do want to emphasize, while his mother is part of the SCS team, Mr. Dumont is not. He was purely testifying on his own and not for Save Community Schools.
- This morning I provided the committee with the SCS Report to the SBE in anticipation of our April 20th meeting with them.
- I believe it is comprehensive and will answer many of the questions the SBE has about our asking for approval to withdraw from MAUSD and be reconstituted as the Lincoln School District.
- I don't expect you to read all 18 pages, but I do invite you to flip through it and look at the table of contents. I think it is proof withdrawing towns do not need to be told how to through the withdrawal process. I think they are very capable and I trust the voters to decide if they are willing to take this big step for the town.
- I do think the SBE needs some guidance as do the towns seeking to withdraw. However, requiring withdrawing towns to go through the study committee process almost guarantees that a town with a legitimate reason to withdraw will be discouraged not do it. It is too hard and too cumbersome and does not promote involvement by the public. Withdrawing is not like merging districts.
- So let's agree on the data to ask withdrawing towns to put in a report to the SBE but not prescribe how that should be done. I will provide that list to the committee this afternoon.
- Sec 6 so called Lincoln exception: Suggest Sec 6 be changed to simply say H.727 is not effective for this group of towns for a year after H.727 is passed and effective. You might also want to do the same in Sec. 7 – the so called Ripton exception.
- We started our process in October 2020 – 20 months ago and we still have another 17 months until we can be operational as a School District in July 2023. That is 37 months, more than enough time to get everyone comfortable with our process.