

Chairmen McCrory and Sanchez, Ranking Members Berthel and McCarty, and esteemed members of Education Committee, thank you for allowing us to submit testimony on SB 457, SB 738 and SB 874.

We are totally opposed to SB 457, SB 738 and SB 874 on the basis that it will be harmful to Wilton and similar towns around the state of CT.

The hallmark of what makes Wilton such a special place to live is its schools. We moved here over 10 years ago as empty nesters. We were not going to have children in the Wilton public schools but were very aware of what a cohesive and supporting town Wilton is because of the atmosphere surrounding such a successful school system.

We in Wilton have a very thorough and successful process for managing our budgets. Forced regionalization will completely negate the process that is used to provide services to students/residents in towns like Wilton; and so much of this is the active participation in developing the school budget. We, as a town, know what our students need and can best address this.

Wilton is already successfully engaging in "SHARED SERVICES." This model can be achieved without a mandated consolidation/regionalization of school systems. We are successful in managing our funds while still producing a top school in the state.

Wilton is not a city – residents have made a concerted choice not to live and send children to city schools when we moved here. We have chosen this for our families. This is the CT where we chose to buy our homes. We have invested in the economy of the area because of this. And the proposed bills SB 457, SB 738 and SB 874 would completely negate this.

Such a move will undo the cohesiveness that is Wilton, and we're sure that of other similar towns around the state. Your concept of economizing school funds will be a wasted process if forced regionalization keeps people from considering a move to CT and forces current residents to move away.

We are strongly opposed to bills SB 457, SB 738 and SB 874.

Thank you again for hearing our testimony. We are happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Barbara and Steven Bralower
39 Marvin Ridge Place
Wilton, CT 06897