

RE: edtestimony@cga.ct.gov

Subject: school regionalization, SB 738 and SB 457

February 18, 2019

From Marina Campbell
291 Mountain Road
Wilton CT 06897

Dear committee members,

I, along with thousands of other Wilton (and neighboring towns) residents VERY strongly oppose school regionalization at any level and in any way, shape or form.

As you surely must be aware, our local schools are the crown jewels of our communities. A vast majority of us have moved here FOR the schools, putting up with horrendous commutes, high taxes, high real estate prices and other inconveniences for the sake of our children's education.

People move to Wilton and other similar small towns and will continue to move here for the same reason.

The schools drive the quality of the community. And the economy of the community.

Most people move here for the schools, exactly as they are, and for NO OTHER REASON.

While this is generally true in many local communities, it is even more so in Wilton, where we have no beach, no vibrant urban center, no snazzy areas like Darien and New Canaan.

In Wilton, the school is at the very core of our community and our identity.

If you change, alter, tamper etc with that in any way, there will be no draw to this town and you will be responsible for destroying a community and gutting a town of 18,000 people.

I cannot emphasize enough how problematic regionalization would be for the many small communities, which are very important to Connecticut's economy, image and growth.

And most importantly you would be completely destroying the future of thousands of children of the families already committed to living here.

It is a fundamental right we citizens have to choose where to live and where to send our kids to school.

Whatever costs saving you believe you would have with regionalization -- assuming indeed, that the plan has been fully fleshed out enough that significant costs savings are guaranteed and that there is absolutely no other way to cut costs whatsoever -- would be totally overshadowed by the destruction of these communities, loss of residents , loss of jobs -- a total disaster for many many years to come.

Connecticut has enough problems already and is not drawing enough people and money. The schools are a main draw, with smaller communities such as Wilton generating significant revenue.

If you regionalize the schools, especially combining Wilton and Norwalk districts (a particularly bad idea), you will drive away people and money, having nothing else to offer.

If you decide, despite strong opposition, to regionalize the schools you will be forever remembered for and be held responsible for one of the most disastrous

decisions ever made for education, for the local economy and for Connecticut families.

I would greatly appreciate a response to this email and what you plan to do with this testimony.

Thank you for your attention to this very serious matter impacting tens of thousands of CT residents, workers, employers, employees and children.

Sincerely,

Marina Campbell