

Feb-26-2019

Dear Education Committee.

I am writing this letter strongly oppose these 3 bills SB 738, SB 457 and SB 874, and any other bills to force regionalization or consolidation of Connecticut Public Schools.

I am the father of 2 boys, a 5th grader and 1st grader, both go to the public schools in Wilton. My wife and I moved to Wilton from Norwalk 6 years ago. The sole reason of moving was because of Wilton's reputation of great public schools. We are paying twice the property tax comparing to living in Norwalk, but we have no regrets whatsoever, since Wilton has better quality of education and a wonderful special needs service. My younger son with speech delays receives proper therapy care that no other towns can compare.

Regarding the 3 regionalization bills, I find them very upsetting that none of the bills have shown evidence on how it can be cost effective to public schools, worse is that none of the bills have mentioned the impact on the quality of schools if regionalized. These impacts include larger school sizes, less parents' engagement with schools and teachers, less or no local control of schools. I am very concerned about decreasing the quality in education. Basically, seeing a bill that forces my children to go to a school in another town because it is more cost effective makes no sense to me. It contradicts with the fundamental reason why I moved my family to Wilton in the first place.

Talking to a neighbor who is currently selling their house, they have big concerns when potential buyers are questioning about Wilton School's regionalization issues. Most families moving to Wilton are attracted to good public schools. If this is taken away, who will want to stay in a high property tax town like Wilton?

The regionalization also means that our hard earned money that we use to pay the property tax, which is supposed to use on local schools, but now have to be shared with other towns. I strongly feel like being robbed by force.

We feel forcing small towns like Wilton to accept the regionalization bills is violating our rights! It is not fair to small town families being forced to accept legislation because of the size of the town. The negative impact on Wilton housing market has already started to show because of this. If any of the 3 bills does pass, my wife and I will have no choice but to move out of Connecticut altogether, because of concerns on decreasing quality of schools and disappointment on how the state is run.

Sincerely,

Simon Chiu

A Concerned Parent of 2 Wilton Public School Students