

To: EDTestimony@cga.ct.gov

Subject: Opposition to SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874

I am writing to strongly oppose SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874 and any other bill that opens the door to forced regionalization of public schools in Connecticut.

Like literally everyone I know, I moved to Connecticut (specifically to Ridgefield and then Wilton) because of the excellent quality of the public schools. It is one of our only crowning achievements as a state. Shockingly, not one of the bills includes a reference to school quality.

It is obvious that the state cannot move to regionalization without the potential of incurring additional costs, such as the cost of adding an administrative layer which may not be offset by a reduction in the number of school superintendents. It is also obvious that moving to a regionalized school system would destroy the fiber of our communities and community engagement with the school system. Frankly, more affluent residents will simply remove their children to private schools, and they may leave the state to do so. If the schools are not excellent, for many of us there is literally no reason to be here.

I work for a Fortune 200 company based in Stamford, CT. My company has beautiful facilities in or near metropolitan areas in North Carolina, Delaware, Georgia, Ohio, Illinois and in many other locations across the U.S. Should forced regionalization be implemented, I would request a transfer and notify my H.R. colleagues of my reasons for doing so. I would also encourage my company to reduce or eliminate their CT footprint. It is simply too expensive to live here if the schools are not excellent.

I am the parent of a current student at Wilton High School, the parent of two recent graduates, and I am an alumni myself. My parents moved here in 1969 *for the schools*, and I returned when my children reached elementary school age. I have "deep roots" in Connecticut but this would be the last straw. I will not throw good money after bad, regardless of how much the value of my home would plummet (and property values here never recovered from the recession). Should forced regionalization (or coerced regionalization by assessment of cost-prohibitive penalties on

communities that “opt out”) be implemented, this state will be deprived not only of my state income and property tax, but also the sales tax I pay on purchases in Connecticut and my support of local commerce.

If the quality of the education diminishes, I see no reason to stay here. I see no reason to own property here. We need to generate income by attracting more commerce and tourism. We also need better, faster public transportation to support employment opportunities within the state and in neighboring New York City. We do not need forced regionalization of our schools.

This issues cannot be delayed or “kicked down the road”. It is already preventing people from purchasing homes in CT. I strongly urge you to oppose SB 738, SB 457, SB 874, and any other legislation that opens the door to forced regionalization of Connecticut public schools.

Thank you for your consideration.

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