

To Whom it May Concern,

We are writing to express our tremendous concern and disappointment about the proposed SB 738, SB 457 and SB 874, and our request to withdraw these bills. These bills are creating uncertainty about education in Connecticut, which will deter investment in real estate and business and create long-term damage to both Wilton and the state.

We moved to Wilton in 2008 because of one sole reason - the schools. Specifically, we chose Wilton because of the "one school" mentality; namely, that it didn't matter where you lived in town, your children would all go to the same school. We were very diligent in our research, and Wilton was the only town we considered moving to in Connecticut once our first child was born. We knew that we didn't want a town where they were placed in a lottery for school, and potentially on a bus for more than 15 minutes to get to school. I work in Westchester County and we strongly considered moving to New York to lessen my commute. The only draw to Connecticut was the quality of education and intimate size of the Wilton School District. We intentionally did not choose Norwalk, Stamford, Fairfield or other Connecticut towns because of the school size, and are confident that if Norwalk and Wilton had been one district, we would have never decided to live in Connecticut.

If these bills pass:

- Our child's quality of education will be compromised, and there is no empirical evidence to validate that this move actually saves money;
- Our child's quality of life will be adversely impacted, with the potential for longer bus routes and school lotteries;
- We will take fast action to move out of the state, to a location that remains committed to quality education, as the Wilton schools are what keep us in Connecticut;
- Our home value will be adversely impacted;
- Connecticut and the town of Wilton will lose tax payers as the town school system is the primary draw to this area, continuing to drive new residents to choose New York over Connecticut.

For our family and the families we have met since we moved to this town, the Wilton schools are the only reason we moved here. As two involved working parents, and two significant tax payers, if this proposed legislation passes, know that you will be losing two long term Connecticut residents and our tax dollars. There will be zero reason for us to stay in Connecticut, as we would rather move closely to my work to lessen my commute, and still maintain the same quality of small school district size in a smaller Westchester school district.

We strongly hope that you withdraw SB 738, SB 457 and SB 874.

Regards,

Andy and Melissa DeBernardis



Wilton CT