

Name: Daniel Eggleston
Address: 40 Washington Post Dr.
Town: Wilton, CT
Bill #'s: SB 738, SB 457, SB 874
Date: 2/27/2019

This written testimony is in response to the proposed bills SB 738, SB 457 and SB 874. I'm writing to the education committee today for the first time, as the proposed bills mentioned above have raised such a high degree of concern personally and among the community that I felt it necessary to take every step possible to voice my opposition.

My family moved to the Town of Wilton in 2012, based predominately on the quality of the school district. In fact, I moved from Norwalk to Wilton, and in the process paid a substantial premium for my house based solely on the fact that it was part of the Wilton School District. I am not alone. In fact, a recent survey sponsored by the Wilton Board of Education found that over **80% of families** that moved to Wilton did so primarily because of the School District. The same survey asked how residents felt about other aspects of the community and it was evident in the results that without the schools, the community had much less draw for young families.

I'm gravely concerned about the effects that school regionalization would have on the Town of Wilton. It would detrimentally impact our lives in numerous ways, from reduced educational quality for my children, to dramatically reduced property and home value, to reduced population, job potential and wages. Wilton would not be the only community impacted in this manner. Our next door neighbor Ridgefield would experience very similar negative consequences with its proposed regionalization.

In the face of high taxes and already declining populations, this proposal would remove one of the most important factors that keep residents in the state of Connecticut despite fiscal headwinds. These forced regionalization proposals would only serve to accelerate the population decline as residents flee declining property values for stronger out-of-state school districts. I myself would be one of those residents likely to leave the community that I've resided in happily since 2012.

State leadership needs to look very closely at the attributes that make Connecticut communities an attractive place to live and raise families and accentuate and build on those attributes, not tear them down. It is absolutely critical that these proposals be unequivocally rejected for the preservation of our communities and the preservation of Connecticut's leadership role in primary education within the United State.

Sincerely,

Daniel Eggleston