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REF: Opposition to Bills SB 457, SB 738 and SB 874

Chairman McCrory and Sanchez, Ranking Members Berthel and McCarty and esteemed members of the education committee, thank you for allowing me to submit testimony on SB 457, SB 738 and SB 874.

As a parent of two elementary aged children currently enrolled in the Wilton public school system I strongly oppose SB 457, SB 738, SB 874 and any other bill that either forces school regionalisation or penalises towns that do not wish to voluntarily regionalise by way of withholding existing state funding.

Our family moved to Wilton four years ago from Hong Kong, we had the choice of moving to San Francisco but chose not to live there specifically because of the quality of the public school system. Instead we focused on the east coast and after looking around many towns in Connecticut and New York we finally chose Wilton, specifically because of the reputation of the school system. Like many other parents our children's education is extremely important to us. We feel strongly that regionalising our school system would take control away from the officials that know Wilton best, it would lead to an inefficient allocation of resources and damage a school system that has historically thrived.

The school system in Wilton and the surrounding towns are a prized asset of the state. They should be protected and cherished, not threatened. The schools are a key reason why employers choose to locate their businesses into the state as they know potential employees are attracted to the school districts. The need to reform and regionalise poses a real danger not only to Connecticut's school system, but also to Connecticut's economy. The state badly needs to attract and create new jobs if it is to thrive. Regionalising the school system is a short sighted means of cutting costs and misses the bigger picture.

If the reforms are passed, we will seriously consider selling our home and moving elsewhere. As the key reason for us moving to the state is now under threat. For these reasons I strongly oppose SB 457, SB 738 and SB874.

Thank you again for hearing my testimony.

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