

Craig Jung
137 5 Mile River Road
Darien, CT 06820

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Chairmen 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.

Dear Sirs and Madams,

Two and a half years ago our family moved from London after living 15 years outside of Connecticut. We chose to move to Darien for the school system even though our children attend private schools. Why did we do this? Because a town with an excellent school system retains real estate values because people want to move there. Plain and simple. While no one knows what the long-term ramifications of educational regionalization will have on a community, one can predict with certainty that extremely competitive and well-funded school districts, like the one in Darien, will suffer.

Don't forget that Fairfield County provides the lions share of taxes to the State. Without Fairfield's outsize contribution to the budget, Connecticut would be worse off than it is already. If your "rezoning" of the school districts ends up weakening local school systems, and by follow on, real estate values, you further discourage a large tax base from moving to Fairfield Country. In fact, you are encouraging them to move altogether.

Already Connecticut is one of the highest taxed states in the Union. Already we are seeing net migration from the state. Connecticut is one of the only states to not have recovered jobs to pre 2008 levels. Please do not use our good school system as a experiment in which you believe you can eek out savings to the state. Instead I urge you to focus your cost cutting efforts in the two areas that can make real impact; State Employees pensions and benefits.

Thank you again for reading my testimony. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Craig Jung

