

To Our Connecticut Lawmakers,

We are writing to express our strong opposition to Senator Looney & Senator Duffs proposed bills PSB 738, PSB 457 and PSB 874 which would force regionalization of Connecticut public schools.

My husband and I have both experienced regionalized education while growing up in California and attending the public schools there. We know exactly how cost cuts and lack of localized decision-making dramatically reduces the quality of education. We also knew that if an opportunity came up to move, we would leave California in search of a better life for our family. We got that opportunity in October of 2000, when a position opened and we had our choice of North Carolina, Georgia, New York or Connecticut. We ultimately chose Wilton, CT based on the schools, the community, and the natural beauty.

As a parents of public school students in Wilton, Connecticut, we have witnessed first hand the benefits of locally run public schools. Our children are educated in a nurturing environment where teacher engagement is high, individualized student learning is understood and acknowledged and high achievement is praised. We have loved raising our family here and are now on the cusp of retirement with the last of our three children heading out to college less than two years.

As our son heads into his final years of high school, My husband and I are becoming increasingly concerned with how our lawmakers have changed our state. With retirement on the horizon, we are faced with some decisions to make. Decisions on where to live, where to own property and where to spend our retirement. Certainly the weather in January, February and March don't make a strong case for Connecticut. Nor do the heating and electric bills. Or the huge state taxes or the property tax rates. Or the home values.

Though we understand how economies of scale appear attractive from a fiscal standpoint, this bill attacks our most precious asset as a community and as a state - the quality of our schools. If approved, this bill would only further an additional outflow of residents, many of whom came to this state for the schools, further eroding state revenue and worsening the state's fiscal crisis

Further, we are certain that the geographical incompatibility of the surrounding towns in Fairfield County alone would increase transportation costs, thereby negating any savings offered via economies of scale and would only succeed in eliminating local control and harming school quality.

For these reasons, we implore you for your support in opposing PSB 738, PSB 457 and PSB 874 or any other efforts to force consolidation of Connecticut public schools.” Lawmakers voting to approve these bills WILL NOT receive our vote in future elections. In our house alone we have four voters with a fifth becoming eligible in November.

Sincerely,

Shawn and David Kahal
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