

February 27, 2019

My Opposition to SB 457, SB 738 and SB 874

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.

My name is Michael Marley and I strongly oppose SB 457, SB 738 and SB 874 and any other legislation that considers forced regionalization of Connecticut public schools.

About a year ago, I moved with my family to Wilton, CT. We saved and worked hard to be able to make the move to Wilton and we did this because we have children that we wanted in the Wilton school district. There are plenty of other both larger and smaller towns in the tri-state area, but we had our hearts set on Wilton, due to the opportunity for our children to be a part of the Wilton school system and for them to grow up in a tight-knit small Connecticut town.

When we heard about the bills being proposed (SB 457, SB 738 and SB 874) our hearts sank. How could the state government come in and propose to make changes that would risk doing irreparable harm to the schools in the area without any proof that regionalization improves education? We now find ourselves in a very difficult position as we consider our options if forced school consolidation becomes a reality.

My fear is that if school systems like Wilton are regionalized, that the quality of education in these towns would not only be negatively impacted (a huge problem in and of itself) but it would also cause families to reconsider moving to towns like Wilton. If this debate was happening last year, I can honestly say that we likely would not have decided to move to Wilton. It is bad enough that we have seen many large companies leave the state in recent years, but I am concerned that with bills like these, things will just get worse and there will be an exodus of families from the state of Connecticut as well.

I truly hope that there is some reconsideration and that the current administration does not do irreparable harm to local towns, the state of Connecticut and our future. Please oppose SB 457, SB 738 and SB 874 and any other legislation that considers forced regionalization of Connecticut public schools. Thank you for hearing my testimony.

Thank you,

Michael Marley
Wilton, CT