

To Whom it may concern:

**Subject - Senate Bill 454/457/738/431, and the Governor's budget bill regarding regionalization (SB 874)**

My name is Steven Parrinello and I am a resident of Wilton Connecticut. My home address is 32 Shadow Lane, Wilton CT 06897. My email address is steven.parrinello@gmail.com.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 454/457/738/874 to force regionalization of Connecticut public schools.

I also strongly oppose bill SB 431 that proposes to divert motor vehicle tax revenue from municipalities to the state government

I moved to Wilton specifically because of the schools. Stripping local control of schools will irreversibly change the character of our town and the conversation of school regionalization will continue (and has already) hurt our property values in the town of Wilton. I currently work in Manhattan and have plenty of options in the tri-state NY area to live (some with better commutes) but chose Wilton to move my family for the quality education regardless of the already high property taxes.

Any consideration of mandatory consolidation of schools must start with education quality and there is no proof that larger schools are better than smaller ones. School consolidation can mean longer bus rides for students which leads to lower achievement scores, more absenteeism, and health consequences for students.

A 2011 study by the National Education Policy Center found the savings from school consolidation are "vastly overestimated." UConn found in 2010 that there is no link between efficiency and academic performance.

The Governor's bill to require municipalities to fund a portion of teacher pension costs for a "tax grab" is appalling. I am vehemently opposed to this concept because, at its heart, it is a dereliction of state responsibility. Also the fact that the plan includes a surcharge for a town like Wilton that pay teachers salaries that exceed the state median but doesn't account for a higher cost of living in areas such as Fairfield county or impact of binding arbitration. Local municipalities had no influence over the design or the decision to fund (or not fund) the plan. The state should not be shifting the burden to local municipalities including Wilton, that have responsibly managed their finances.

Any plan to divert motor vehicle tax away from towns and have the state re-distribute tax funds as they seem fit is completely misguided. Towns like Wilton have been very efficient in using their property tax dollars for a quality education. I don't see why they should be punished from the failure of other districts.

The amount of combined property taxes and motor vehicle taxes are already very high compared to that of our Westchester and Northern Bergen county neighbors and placing this additional tax burden will force constituents like me to leave Wilton for greener pastures.

Do I have your support to oppose **Senate Bill 454/457/738/431, and the Governor's budget bill regarding regionalization (SB 874)?**

Thank you  
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