

S.B. 457, An Act Concerning the Size of School Districts
S.B. 738, An Act Concerning the Creation of Regional School Districts
S.B. 874, An Act Concerning Education Initiatives and Services in Connecticut

Dear 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.

As a parent of public school students, I strongly oppose SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874 and any other bill that opens the door to forced regionalization of Connecticut Public Schools.

I moved to CT with my family in 2009 due to job relocation to Stamford, CT. When we moved my son was 3 years old. My husband and I looked at houses in each town in lower Fairfield County, as we considered commuting distance, relative affordability, school systems, and town size. We ultimately decided on Wilton, CT because of the great reputation of Wilton's school system and the welcoming and quaint feel of the town.

In 2013 we moved our family to Amsterdam due to another job relocation. However, we found it necessary for me to return with our two children back to the US in 2014. My husband remained in Amsterdam to work, and I returned with the children. At that time, I was not restricted to returning to any particular location in the US. I chose to come back to Wilton, CT. My two children consider Wilton, CT to be their home and wanted to come back to a familiar place and return to school with their friends. I chose Wilton, CT for a second time because of the schools and the warm welcoming atmosphere.

I believe that the cities and towns of CT should maintain local control of the schools that their residents have created and sustained. As a resident of Wilton, CT, I have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in our town's school district. I have also devoted countless hours to support the school system as a parent

and PTA member of Miller Driscoll School, Cider Mill School, and Middlebrook School.

As a resident of Wilton, I have voted in regards to the members of our Board of Education, the school budget on an annual basis, and I have voted in regards to bonding projects related to our schools. I strongly oppose any attempt of the state to take from the residents of any CT town, their school system and their rights in regards to that school system. I currently have the right to send my children to school in the town where I choose to reside, and I expect that right to be upheld by the elected officials of my state.

When I think about Connecticut, I think of the culture of New England, the landscape of quaint small towns, and warm welcoming residents. Local autonomy of the towns and cities in Connecticut are the cornerstone of this state. Each town has an individual identity built by residents over the past few hundred years. Eroding the quality and the character of our local schools, will erode the quality and character of our towns.

This entire conversation has forced me to reconsider my reasons for residing in CT. My husband's job allows him the flexibility to live in other areas of the country. We do not want to move, but the economic impacts of living in CT are beginning to outweigh the benefits for our family.

I hope you will oppose SB 738, SB 457, SB 874, and any other legislation that opens the door to forced regionalization of Connecticut public schools.

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

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