

## **Oppose Senate Bill 457, 738, 874**

From: Ms. Xun Zhou (Town of Wilton, CT)

As a parent of public school students, I oppose SB 457, 738, and 874 that would require regionalization of our schools and unfairly increase financial burdens of selective small towns.

We moved to Wilton over a decade ago specifically for its nationally recognized high-quality education system. Over the years, we got to know our children's teachers personally and greatly appreciate their dedication and hard work for all the kids in our schools. The high-quality and efficiency of our schools can only be achieved and maintained while the school management is remained locally where the parents have a say. We strongly oppose the forced regionalization by the government to strip away our rights to the management of our school.

The forced regionalization will not save money as number of studies have shown that

- The cost of combining resources, retrofitting schools, and leveling up salaries, and sorting through legal obligations will offset any savings.<sup>1</sup>
- A 2011 study by the National Education Policy Center found the savings from school consolidation are "vastly overestimated."<sup>2</sup>
- Larger school districts end up hiring more administrators, not fewer.<sup>3</sup>
- UConn found in 2010 that there is no link between efficiency and academic performance.<sup>4</sup>

Any consideration of mandatory consolidation of schools must start with education quality. We firmly believe that expanding school will harm education quality by taking away the personalized attention between teachers and students that can only exist in small school environment.

The Governor's Bill 874 raised an equally worrisome concern that the government is using its power to redistribute the tax revenue. We, the tax payers, strongly oppose the bill's forced taxation. It is an insult and ultimate discrimination to hard-working people who have been paying high taxes and contributing to the state's economy. How is it justice to punish people who have worked hard to be successful and have made the most contribution to this state by increasing their tax burdens even more?! This bill will only drive more talented worker to leave the state, which in term, will decrease the state's tax revenues in the long run.

**As parents and residents of this state, we urge you to step up from mere politicians associated with a Party with focus on only fixing near-term problems. We urge you to be true leaders and exercise your responsibilities with care and prudence that will lead to long-term prosperity of our state. Please vote to oppose SB 457, 738, 874!**

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.aasa.org/SchoolAdministratorArticle.aspx?id=13218>

<sup>2</sup> <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED515900>

<sup>3</sup> <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED515900>

<sup>4</sup> Heffley, Dennis, and Can Bekaroglu. "Getting More From Less, Measuring Efficiency in Connecticut High School Districts." The Connecticut Economy, Winter (2010).