

Attn: EDtestimony@cga.ct.gov

Re: Opposition to SB 738, SB 457 and SB 874

Dear Chairmen McCrory and Sanchez, Ranking Members Berthel and McCarty, and esteemed members of the Education Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to submit my written testimony on SB 457, SB 738 and SB 874.

I am writing to state my opposition to SB 738, SB 457 and SB 874. Over half a century ago, my parents chose to settle down in Connecticut. They had their choice of many towns – Westport, Norwalk, New Canaan, and Wilton, to name but a few. In the end, they chose Wilton for its excellent school system.

As a life-long resident of Connecticut, I do not support the forced regionalization bills before the Connecticut state legislature (SB 457 and SB 738 (*formerly SB 454*) and SB 874). This is a case of being ‘penny wise, pound foolish.’ Mandates such as those proposed in these bills do not align with the values of this state’s citizenry. Regionalization/consolidation of school systems should be voluntary, not mandatory. These bills do not detail precisely the ‘benefits’ of such proposed regionalization and thus, are rightly opposed by many citizens.

Over 25 years ago, despite opposition, Gov. Lowell Weicker put through a state income tax which was supposed to clean up all debt. Instead, the state government has mismanaged its funds, and now, again, expects the citizens to pick up the tab through school regionalization and more taxes.

Several realtors attended an informal meeting with our town’s state representative a few weeks ago. Word of this proposal regionalization has already caused people to change their minds about moving here. Connecticut is a state where more people move out than move in. I do see mandated regionalization as a negative impact, and perhaps a further nail in the coffin of this state.

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

Regards,

Elyse Dickenson
Wilton, Connecticut