

February 25, 2019

To: Education Committee

Subject: Opposition to SB 738, SB 457, SB 874

I am unable to attend the hearing on March 1st in Hartford due to previously scheduled commitments but wanted to submit my written testimony in advance.

I strong **oppose** bills SB 738, SB 457 and SB 874.

I believe that if either of the bills is passed, they will affect not only the quality of education for our children and the real estate values but will also effect Connecticut's means to attract and retain local businesses.

The quality of education has been one the most attractive qualities of living and doing business in Connecticut. I was privileged to spend elementary/middle school years at Wilton Public Schools and after a brief move out of state, attended Weston High School. The quality of education I received wasn't apparent to me until college when I realized how more prepared I was than many of my peers.

After college and graduate school, I chose to move back to Connecticut with my new and growing family to ensure my children were able to receive the same gift of education as I was. We chose Wilton for its outstanding schools and its close knit community. Both my children have thrived and after this year, we will no longer have a need for the public schools. So, why am I writing this letter if it doesn't affect my children? I am writing this letter because not only do I feel passionately that regionalization will affect the quality of education for my friends or neighbors in the community, but I also believe the adoption of these bills will affect the sales and operation of my business.

I am a shareholder and President/CEO of a mid-sized service business which covers the entire Northeastern U.S. with our headquarters in Wilton, CT. We employ 150 people with half of them living in the state of Connecticut. Our business takes place in the client's home and we manage our staff virtually. We could have considered less expensive places to have our headquarters reside whether it be other towns in Connecticut or other states in the Northeast. In fact, our business really could operate anywhere. Despite the cost of living, we chose to invest in Wilton because of the friendly community and the quality of the education.

More than 20 close friends have recently moved their families out of Connecticut simply because of the high taxes. Since the communication of these bills, even more friends, employees and clients have said they are looking to move elsewhere. We have already felt the effects of the migration out of the state within our business sales and revenues; I can only imagine how this will negatively impact us further. Our reasons for keeping our headquarters in Wilton or Connecticut for that matter are shrinking.

Please accept my opposition to bills numbered: SB 738, SB 457, SB 874 to preserve the quality of the education, reduce the migration out of our state and ensure businesses like mine are retained.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Hill Connolly

Wilton, CT 06897