

February 24, 2019

**To: Education Committee**—Connecticut General Assembly

**From:** Gail Latone  
Wilton, CT

**RE:** Bill numbers: **SB 738, SB 457 and SB 874**

My family and I moved to Wilton 13 years ago for the town size/population and good education system. Over the years we have been able to be a part of how this town grows and be a part of changes in the schools. That is what makes small towns like Wilton work. My family has sacrificed financially to be a part of this town where we can be a part of the school system decisions. For the past 2 years I have been a substitute teacher at Wilton schools and see firsthand how reactive our schools are to providing quality education for our diverse population. We will lose that ability and negatively impact many families financially if we regionalize schools in Connecticut.

I highly oppose the concept of forced regionalization in any form. It not only can degrade education quality and property values, there is no empirical evidence to validate that such a move actually leads to efficiencies and cost savings.

Unlike the state, Wilton has managed their finances even through difficult times by cutting back and pushing our legislation to be fiscally responsible. I find it appalling that the Governor is proposing to require municipalities to fund a portion of teacher pension costs. For decades our state leaders failed to adequately fund the plan they created. Local municipalities had no influence over the design or the decision to fund (or not fund) the plan. I oppose any shifts of burden to local municipalities, including Wilton, by way of any surcharge for towns where teacher salaries exceed the state median or to tax payers by taking motor vehicle taxes from municipalities (SB 431).

These proposed bills will only further erode our states status and divert new residents from moving to small towns like Wilton and the state of Connecticut as a whole. Vote “no” to bills SB 738, SB 457, SB 874, and SB 431.