

To Whom it May Concern,

As a Wilton and Connecticut resident for many years, I strongly oppose bills SB 738, SB 457 and SB 874 related to our school regionalization. I believe these bills will have a significant adverse impact on Connecticut's public education system and associated property values with no increased benefit to the school systems.

I share the important goal with all Connecticut residents and legislators to increase revenue, reduce spending, and balance the State's budget. However, school regionalization is NOT the way to achieve these goals. There is no empirical evidence to validate that regionalization actually leads to cost savings. Even if the argument can be made about school consolidation would reduce costs, doing so at the expense of our kids' future education is not acceptable.

Education is best managed in a "bottom-up" environment by parents, educators and local boards of education. The proposed bills is taking away the distinct advantages our locally controlled education models. The detriments of SB 738 SB 457 and SB 874 are paramount, including potential degradation of education quality and decrease in property values. Coupled with high income and property taxes, SB 738 SB 457 and SB 874 will cause Connecticut to lose its competitive advantages as a state people want to move to (or stay in).

The state of Connecticut has high quality educational programs. Towns such as Wilton, Westport, and Ridgefield are amongst the top school districts in the country! People often pay a premium for their houses to move to these districts so that they can take advantage of the properly run school systems. Nothing is more rewarding that knowing your kids will have the best schooling to prepare them for their future.

Please, do not mess with our kids' education! Hands off our schools. Please vote NO to SB 738, SB 457 and SB 874!!

Robert Louth

Resident of Wilton, Connecticut