

February 27, 2019

RE: Written Testimony AGAINST Proposed Bills 738 (fka 454), 457 and 874

Chairmen McCrory and Sanchez, Ranking Members Berthel and McCarty, and esteemed members of the Education Committee, thank you for allowing me to submit testimony on SB 457, SB 738 and SB 874.

I am writing you to express my family's opposition to Proposed Bill No. 738, SB 457 and SB 874. Forcing Connecticut School Districts to regionalize or penalizing towns that do not regionalize by withholding state funds are ideas that can NOT be supported.

My family and I moved to Wilton from a much larger Connecticut school district. My child was just a number in an oversized system, anxious and not meeting his full potential. We specifically chose the Wilton Public Schools for its reputation as an exceptional school district. My son is now thriving! Each day he is greeted by an administration/staff who know him by name and he receives an individualized program that specifically caters to his learning style. The students in our small town are taught by outstanding teachers/staff who are invested in their growth because many of them are also Wilton residents themselves. These bills would not only adversely impact the quality of education provided in Wilton, it will likely take control out of our town and irreversibly change the character of Wilton. Our district attracts quality teachers and administrators who value small districts and the personal connections they can make with the families who live here.

In addition, there have been studies conducted in states that have regionalized and not seen gains or benefits from their consolidation efforts. I refer you to the link <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeedserv/sdorganizationreport>

See page 10, a study done by a Chicago based public policy research organization which concluded that students perform better in smaller districts and overall that larger district enrollments are associated with lower levels of achievement.

Please also see the research to come directly out of Hartford.

http://www.hfpg.org/files/7915/3013/0299/Regionlization_Report_Draft_as_of_6-27-2018.pdf?fbclid=IwAR27XvqWyVctleqodMiRmpSKo_5v6vzqXzw4pQ7hD7KpfHRI4uryww05AiY

Can I count on you to oppose SB 738, SB 457, SB 874 or any bill that will force or penalize Connecticut School Districts that do not regionalize? The implications will be a serious detriment to our local towns, and to the quality of education our children receive!

Thank you again for hearing my testimony. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

Regards,

Leila Millin
Wilton, CT Resident