

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.

My family moved from Norwalk five years ago so our children could attend school in Wilton. My husband and I made many personal sacrifices so our children could be educated in a small town with local control. We pay a lot in taxes and receive very little in return. We pay for garbage pickup, plowing and benefit from very few services compared to the surrounding towns. The ONLY reason we are in Wilton, and frankly Connecticut, is for the education our children are receiving. If any form of forced regionalization were to occur, we would strongly reevaluate staying in Connecticut. My husband commutes into Manhattan for work, so moving out of Connecticut would become a possibility.

I am vehemently opposed to SB 738, SB 457 and SB 874 and any other bill that opens the door to forced regionalization of Connecticut Public Schools. The mere mention of these bills has given pause to new families moving to Wilton. Regionalization will do irreparable damage to our already diminishing housing market. These are fiscally driven bills giving no thought to what this will do to the quality of education. Connecticut is no longer a desirable location for corporations and if you erode this bright spot in the state, Connecticut will suffer beyond repair.

Our town knows what is best for our town. In fact, Wilton has successfully shared services between The Board of Selectmen and Board of Education. If you want to improve circumstances for poorly performing districts, learn from high performing ones. One size does NOT fit all when it comes to education: pull up the bottom instead of tearing down the top. I strongly urge you to oppose SB 738, SB 457 and SB 874 and any other legislation that opens the door to forced regionalization of Connecticut Public Schools.

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

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