

## Public Comment Regarding SB 457, SB 738, SB 874

My husband grew up in Wilton, CT and we moved to Weston with our 2 young boys when they were 2 and 3. We have been here 8 years and always said to our friends that we planned to stay in Weston even after raising our children. Most of our peers expressed an interest to leave, due to taxes and cost of living, once their children were in college. After this latest election, and the discussion being focused on raising taxes, not cutting spending, and undermining local control, we have become uncertain about staying in Connecticut after raising our children. In addition, when looking at how much money we were willing to invest in the Connecticut real estate market, we decided to keep it minimal in comparison to our original plans.

What does that mean for Connecticut, and Weston: less real estate tax contributions than we would otherwise have made, less money going into the coffers when we were not using services, ie, the schools, one less volunteer fireman, and most importantly state income tax revenue from a good job in New York City. Connecticut cannot keep chasing high earners out of this state; they cannot decrease the high quality of education in many local communities that is currently the draw to bring people in or keep them for any length of time. Connecticut cannot afford to lose the community members that volunteer and contribute to our local communities, keeping costs down in terms of fire department, social service budgets, and many other areas people contribute their time and resources.

Until Hartford gets this message and really understands that people have choices about where they live, what attracts them to Connecticut, keeps them here, and what drives them out, Connecticut will continue losing revenue and diminishing its chances at economic recovery. My sense is that lawmakers need to hear this kind of story, which I imagine could be a large number of this community. They care about their bottom line. Leaving aside for a moment what the mass exodus does to real estate values, imagine what it means if much of Fairfield County and surrounding communities no longer have their primary residences in Connecticut. There is already data out there on how the outward migration has impacted tax revenue. If pension liabilities get shifted to small towns and local control is undermined by this or school regionalization, Connecticut's attractiveness to current and potential residents goes away. The greatest impact will not be in those who can afford to take the loss on their homes and leave, it will be on those who cannot afford to do so. For these reasons, I implore you to vote against school regionalization bills: SB 874, SB 457, SB 738 and pension liability bill: HB 7150.

Respectfully,  
Leanne Anderson  
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