

February 26, 2019

RE: SB 738, SB 457 and SB 874

Chairman McCroy 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 and I strongly oppose SB738, SB457 and SB 874 and any other bill that opens the door to forced regionalization of our Connecticut Public Schools.

We reside in Wilton and we love our schools. My husband went to Wilton Public School many years ago and we are now raising our three daughters here. The Wilton Public Schools are our community, it is our heart and soul of this town, the reason people move here. Our investment in education is one that our community embrace and the success of our students is a matter of civic pride. Our children should not pay for the State Governments lack of efficiency over the years.

I don't believe that forcing school districts to regionalize is appropriate or in the best interest of our town and our residents. Regionalizing schools will not create a more efficient school system and will jeopardize the major investments we have done in our schools. In a UConn study in 2010 they found that there is no link between efficiency and academic performance. It makes no sense to compel districts to give up their autonomy in the areas of education that impact instruction and curriculum. Connecticut has long been known as having some of the best public schools in the nation. It costs a lot to live in Connecticut but a great public school system is one of the benefits.

It will not save money. The geographical incompatibility of the surrounding towns in Fairfield County alone would increase cost, thereby negating any savings offered via economies of scale and would only succeed in eliminating local control and harming school quality. A 2011 study by the National Education Policy Center found that savings from school consolidation are "vastly overestimated"

Everyone involved in the schools will be adversely effected, from parents, students ,teachers, administrators , all residents and possibly prospective residents. The uncertainty will certainly deter new residents, not just for Wilton but other towns as well, and with no residents ,it will deter new business investments and that is not in anyones best interest, town or state. We are doing the right thing and should not be forced to adhere to a top down, one-size fits-all approach that absolutely is not in our towns best interest.

These bills attacks our most precious asset as a community and as a state.

Thank you for hearing my testimony.

Carolina Corrigan, Wilton CT