

2/24/19

Dear Education Committee and Governor Lamont,

Re: Opposition to SB 457, SB 738 and SB 874

I would like to register my strong opposition to any form of state driven regionalization of the school districts in CT. In particular, I am strongly opposing to SB457, SB738 and SB874 and any other propositions which may suggest a study or a committee that is allowed to recommend forced consolidation.

My husband and I have been living in Wilton CT since 2007. We moved as soon as our older one was born, although this was not convenient work wise (my husband has a 1.5hr commute to Storrs CT. My commute ranged from 25 min to an hour over the years). Yet, we always knew we wanted to live in Wilton and stay in Wilton. The superb public education system and the strong sense of community where people know one another, were the primary reasons. So we bought our home at high premium in 2007, gladly paying some of the highest property taxes in the state knowing it goes for a great cause we believe in, and expecting this to be our forever home where we will raise our kids and set our roots. Our house is quite modest, however we made the choice to live in a smaller house for the benefit of great school system and a wonderful small community.

Raised by a family of educators (my mom was a teacher, then principle, then superintendent in Jerusalem, my sister has a PHD in Mathematics Education and is teaching educators), top school system and best education for my kids have always been by far the most important consideration when it relates to where we live.

We now have two kids aged 10 and 11 in 5th and 6th grades. We are so grateful we live in Wilton. We love our school system here and our community. We believe the small school system is what makes our community so desirable, it's the center of lives for everyone who lives in Wilton and the town is completely centered around our schools. The town's identity is defined by our school. If we were interested in a bigger school system we could have easily moved to Hartford, pay a lot less for a much bigger house and have a much more convenient commute to work for my husband.

When we heard about the proposed bills related to consolidation and regionalization of school system, we started to have serious discussions about leaving CT to another state that does not put at risk a highly successful and award winning school system, and that puts the choice of education in the hands of parents where it belongs, vs. government officials. Many of our friends are at the same state as pretty much everyone we know lives in Wilton because of the school system. Both my husband and myself are highly educated, have fantastic jobs we love and want to continue contributing to the state through our property tax and jobs.

It is with heavy hearts we are having these discussions about possibly leaving CT, and we hope you can put our minds to rest and put this idea of regionalization behind us. We urge you to do the right thing, put our children, community and education level at the center, and quickly put this behind us.

Please oppose to SB 738 SB 457 SB 874 and any legislation that opens the door to regionalization of Connecticut public schools.

Sincerely,

Danit Eisdorfer

Wilton, CT