

Subject: **Opposition to SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874**

*Re: testimony for the education and appropriations committees*

Dear Connecticut Education Committee members:

I am writing today in **opposition to SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874**. As a parent of one current and two former Wilton public school students, I strongly oppose SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874 and any other bill that opens the door to forced regionalization of Connecticut Public Schools.

We moved to Wilton 15 years ago for the quality of the town's school system, and the existing school quality is one of the key factors keeping us in the community and in Connecticut.

I understand the state faces a number of financial challenges, but it is not apparent that a school consolidation plan will deliver any meaningful cost savings. Further, none of the three proposed bills makes a single mention of school quality being an objective of the proposals.

I believe that a push to regionalize would erode the quality and unique character of our local schools and our town. I also am concerned about the potential impact of larger school sizes, decreasing administrator and community engagement.

I have read numerous reports that this potential move to regionalize has meaningfully dampened the real estate market and potential relocations into Connecticut, and I have no doubt it will be another factor that drives a family's decision to relocate out of Connecticut, which could have a meaningful negative impact on the entire Connecticut state economy.

I ask that our elected officials consider other ways to address the state's budget constraints, as this set of proposals would do irreparable damage to our towns and Connecticut's economy for years to come.

In closing, I ask that you strongly oppose SB 738, SB 457, SB 874, and any other legislation that opens the door to forced regionalization of Connecticut public schools or other punitive measures that would coerce towns to combine systems.

Regards,  
David Etzbach  
Wilton, CT