

To: edtestimony@cga.ct.gov

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

As a parent of 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.

The reasons for my opposition are:

We moved to CT and the town of Wilton for the schools and the quality of the existing school system is what keeps us here. We have a high quality of education and other services in the current school system from elementary to high school. The regionalization bills erode the quality and the character of our local schools, which erode the quality of the town. None of these bills include even one mention of school quality.

The quality of the existing local schools is maintained through the relatively high taxes (on property). The proposal to regionalize will erode the quality and at the same time increase the tax burden of the local towns in an effort to support a larger regional school district. The net effect is we pay higher taxes for a lesser quality of education, which is unfair to us as local school district residents.

The larger school sizes proposed by the regionalization bills will decrease administrator and community engagement that makes up the character of local schools such as Wilton. This can have a negative impact on the programs and services that the current school system offers. For example, this can have an adverse impact on programs to support special needs students, which are critical to ensure that the schools support all students in a fair manner.

Finally, the proposal to regionalize the school district will have an adverse effect on the economy of the state of Connecticut. We are already seeing the negative impact of the existence of these bills. These bills have dissuaded new residents to move into our local towns with high quality schools as evidenced by the decline in home sales and real estate values in our local towns over the past few years even as home prices have increased significantly in the rest of the nation. The passage of these bills will further prevent the movement of highly skilled workers and businesses into the state and our towns. We have already seen major companies and businesses move out of Connecticut, forcing workers to relocate or take up jobs outside the state. These bills will decrease the creation of new jobs within our state and also channel tax revenue out of the state as portions of our income taxes are going to the states where we work.

Taking the above factors into considerations, I hope you will oppose SB 738, SB 457, SB 874 and any other legislation that opens the door to forced regionalization of Connecticut public schools.

Sincerely,

Venkatraman Iyer

Wilton, CT