

To: edtestimony@cga.ct.gov

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

I am writing to request that you reject the three proposed bills SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874 and any other bill that will open the door to forced or “incentivized” regionalization of the Connecticut Public Schools.

I am a lifelong Connecticut resident and a resident of Wilton for the past 5 years. I grew up in the Connecticut public school system and I am now the parent of 3 children in the public school. My family moved to Wilton specifically to afford our children an excellent public school system. Our community is built around our quality local schools, which are well managed already and do not need forced, incremental or any other form of regionalization.

None of these bills include even one mention of school quality. These bills and others like it run the risk of eroding the quality of our local schools, which directly and significantly impacts the quality of our town. The reason is allegedly cost savings, yet despite my research I have seen no evidence of the amount of money that would allegedly be saved and accordingly there is no way for me (or for you) to even engage in a cost/benefit analysis.

If you pass any of these bills on the road to regionalization - you will ensure accelerated decline in Wilton and other similarly situated towns which provide a disproportionate amount of the revenue to our state government. You would be hurting the very towns in Fairfield County that the State of Connecticut relies on so heavily year after year.

Many of us have resisted the calls from our friends to move and leave Connecticut for more dynamic states. The state has an anemic economy, high tax burden and crumbling infrastructure. These are undeniable facts. We have stayed in Wilton for our children's education. And any claim that “this wouldn't impact Wilton because there are more than 2,000 students” falls on deaf ears, as 1) I'm concerned about others who would be impacted and 2) it's a slippery slope!

Your responsibility in the Educational Committee and Legislature is to make Connecticut more competitive and attractive as a place to live and work. These proposed bills do the complete opposite. They antagonize communities like Wilton and will have a direct and further adverse impact on our local economy and property values.

I respectfully request that you reject these ill-conceived bills SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874.

Sincerely,

Rachel A Pencu
Wilton, CT