

To: edtestimony@cga.ct.gov

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

Chairmen McCrory 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.

I am writing to you as a concerned Connecticut resident and parent to say that I **vehemently oppose school regionalization and SB 738, SB 457 and SB 874**. When my wife and I decided to leave Manhattan ten years ago, we looked at towns in New Jersey, Westchester County, Long Island and Connecticut. These areas all offered vibrant, seemingly close-knit communities, a reasonable commute and good public schools. Wilton, however, offered excellent schools, with and engaged administration in a smaller district and was far more appealing. We chose to move to Connecticut for these schools.

Forced redistricting, taking away a family's right to send their kids to the school district that was the driving force in their decision to move here, is wrong. As an active member of our school community and the Wilton Youth Council, I see first-hand the challenges our schools face in the ongoing efforts to adapt to a world and workforce that is changing. While as a state, we share educational goals, the needs and challenges of each district are unique. Our current administration and superintendent work tirelessly (and efficiently) to create the best outcomes for our students. The superintendents in Norwalk and Wilton face different challenges; combining the districts will only make these challenges greater and solutions more difficult to implement. It is not in the best interest of students and will not improve the quality of education or preparedness. I appreciate the state's budget issues and that measures need to be taken to address them. Redistricting, however, has not been shown to address these issues in a significant way and will be detrimental to the kids, like mine, who'd have to live through the forced process.

For Connecticut's fiscal health to improve in the long run, people need to *want* to move here. The regionalization proposed in bills SB 738, SB 457 and SB 874 will jeopardize one of the main incentives for people to move to the state: our schools. s

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. Thank you again for hearing my testimony. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully,

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