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

As a parent of public school students in the State of Connecticut, I firmly oppose SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874, and any other piece of legislation which may lead to forced regionalization of Connecticut Public Schools.

I was born and raised in a country four thousand miles away, and I arrived in the United States in 2009. After I got married and had children, I chose to settle down in Wilton, and accepted to endure an almost four-hour daily round-trip to New York City, mainly because I wanted my children to have access to world-class public education.

The aforementioned bills purportedly aim to achieve cost reductions at the State level, even though evidence from similar experiments carried out in other states does not suggest that meaningful savings would likely be realized. At the same time, forced regionalization would reduce accountability, create distance between the schools and the communities they serve, and lead to worse educational outcomes.

In other words, forced regionalization would take away the primary reason why many families decide to live in Connecticut and pay income and sales taxes to the State. If the mandatory consolidation of school districts will go into effect, the State will become an unattractive option for families looking for a place to raise their children, those who will be able to leave will do so, and the State will be left without the tax revenues of many individuals in their prime earning years, and with an even more badly stagnating economy.

There are many effective ways for the State to pursue fiscal responsibility. School regionalization isn't one.

Therefore, I hope you will oppose SB 738, SB 457, SB 874, and any other provision that contemplates the forced regionalization of Connecticut public schools

Riccardo Rinaldi, Wilton.