

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

Dear Chairmen McCrory and Sanchez, Ranking Members Berthel and McCarty, and esteemed members of the Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to submit my written testimony on SB 457, SB 738 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.

Our family moved to the town of Wilton in large part because of the excellent local school system, and both of our children currently attend Wilton Public Schools.

When we searched for the right town for our family, we considered some other CT towns, but the common denominator of all of them was the quality of their schools and the local control of the school system.

I find that I must be in opposition to the forced regionalization bills before the Connecticut state legislature (SB 457 and SB 738 (formerly SB 454) and SB 874), because these bills are completely inconsistent with what we value as citizens of Connecticut and resident of Wilton. A foundational value of Connecticut's educational system is the importance of local voice and local control in educational decision making. Therefore, mandating regionalization (or mandating any such action that would fundamentally remake school districts) undermines the values and beliefs that guide Connecticut's school systems.

Furthermore, there has been no evidence presented indicating this would improve educational outcomes or reduce cost. Nor do any of these bills include any mention of school quality. I do not believe that regionalization would be beneficial for our students, for our schools, for our community and for residents of Connecticut.

Connecticut is known for its great schools and its local control and governance. Forced school regionalization is likely to do the opposite than attracting new families considering options in the region. Forced regionalization will be a negative rebranding of Connecticut and our towns and will likely deter new families from moving to CT while also encourage people to leave CT – both of which do and will negatively impact the economic status and economic future of our state.

Thank you for reading my written testimony.

I hope you will oppose SB 738, SB 457 and SB 874 and any other legislation that opens the door to forced regionalization of Connecticut's public schools.

Respectfully,

Dr. Anat Solomon  
Wilton, CT