

Title: Strong opposition to SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874

Honorable Committee Members,

As a parent of the Wilton public school students, I strongly oppose SB 738, SB 457, and SB 874, the bills to force involuntary regionalization of Connecticut public schools.

I moved to Wilton just because of the high-quality schools here. I work harder and am willing to pay higher property tax to invest for our children's education in our public schools. The bills threaten the families living in the small towns like Wilton. The "forced" nature of the proposed regionalization will strip local control of our schools, lower the education quality and academic performance, ultimately ruin the good school system, and irreversibly devastate the character of our town.

I understand the significant budget crisis facing the state. However, there is no empirical evidence to suggest that consolidating school districts leads to cost saving or efficiency. Research published in 2011 by the National Education Policy Center concluded that the savings from school consolidation are vastly overestimated. Larger school districts end up hiring more administrators, not fewer.

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 very much!

Best regards,

Jack Tong

Wilton, CT