

Dear Representatives,

I am writing on behalf of myself and my wife, Susie Travers, residents of Wilton, CT, to express our overwhelming opposition to the proposed school regionalization bills as well as the proposed budget plan under consideration.

As both native New Yorkers, my wife and I did not lightly undertake the decision to move our newly-started family to Connecticut approximately 8 years ago. However, after much consideration and no small amount of research, we ultimately elected to search out a home in Wilton for a variety of reasons. While the sense of community and the network of wonderful people we have established in that time has certainly cemented for us that it was the right decision, the original – and still fundamental – impetus for bringing our family to Connecticut was our understanding of the exemplary quality of the school system into which we would bring our daughter (since moving to Connecticut we have, in fact, increased the size of our family and are now raising two daughters, both of whom will someday be proud graduates of the Wilton school system; further, I extended my New York City-based company into Connecticut, and as a small business owner am now extremely proud to have a 24-person office in Wilton).

We are fortunate and arguably lucky – not everyone is able to move their families nor able to raise them in such an excellent environment. There is no question that in certain respects we are privileged, such that we are able to afford to live here. But with all due respect to the positive aims that are sought through the introduction of these bills, as citizens and taxpayers we feel compelled to raise our hands as individuals and as community members in stark, vehement opposition to these bills. The potential impact – to us, to our children, to our local school system, to our property value, to our community – threatens to undermine all of the reasons we elected to move to and remain in Wilton in the first place.

I won't waste your time rehashing the arguments, for or against. I think that as with most things reasonable minds can and will disagree about the merits of any such proposed legislation and budget plans. I am certain that my views and arguments are unlikely to sway the opinion of anyone who has considered the issues and formed their own opinion. But I would be remiss if I did not raise my hand – and my wife Susie is raising hers right alongside mine – to express just how thoroughly and wholeheartedly we stand in opposition to Senator Martin Looney's Senate Bill 454/738, and the Governor's budget bill (SB 874), as well as Senate Bill 431. Individually and worse, cumulatively, we view these bills as having the likely outcome of significant additional tax obligations on us as Wilton residents as well as (and arguably much more devastatingly) a diminished school system. 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 for your time and consideration of our position.

Jude & Susie Travers
8 Powder Horn Hill Rd
Wilton, CT 06897