

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

To Whom It May Concern:

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.

My family and I moved to Weston, CT five years ago. We were relocating to the area, and the main reason we chose Weston was for its excellent school system. Our son has learning difficulties, and Weston Public Schools provided the types of services that he needs to be a successful student.

We wanted a small, intimate district for our children's education. We wanted small class sizes. We wanted the small-town feel that the Town of Weston offers. Weston is a special place with a great sense of community, and much of that feeling comes from its local schools. Our children are not numbers; they are known by name. I attended a large high school with a graduating class of 800 students. This is not what we wanted for our kids.

Without the school system as it exists today, I can say that we would not have moved to Weston. The excellent schools are what drew us, and many other residents, to the area. Connecticut is having a difficult time attracting new residents and retaining its existing ones. Changing the local quality of our schools is not going to help that situation. Instead, it is going to have a lasting, detrimental effect on our local economy. How are these small towns going to survive if the very feature that draws people to the area - the local schools - no longer hold any appeal?

Southwestern Connecticut is a beautiful area offering world-class schools. Please don't change that. 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 public schools. Please keep our schools local!

Regards,
Holly Wiemken
Weston, CT