

Testimony before the Reapportionment Committee

September 14, 2021

Members of the Reapportionment Committee:

I strongly support redistricting in State Representative District 143, so that the people in the town of Wilton will be able to elect a State Representative who can adequately represent the town's needs and interests.

Right now, the District 143 includes large parts of Wilton and the City of Norwalk. The current configuration of the district is based on typical gerrymandering considerations, rather than the interests of the community. Due to the vastly different priorities in these two municipalities, one representative cannot possibly represent both parts of the district.

Norwalk is one of the largest cities in CT with over 80,000 residents, while Wilton is a typical small town with under 20,000 residents. Before I moved to Wilton, I had lived in Norwalk. While I like both places, I experienced firsthand how the priorities are different. For example, the needs for schools are totally different. Norwalk has 19 public schools while Wilton has 4. Zoning policies in a city are significantly different from those in a small town, for good reasons. The amount of open spaces and natural reserves are also very different between a city and a small town, requiring implementation of different policies. Housing needs and conditions are also vastly different.

As a result, no single representative can vote regularly for the best interests of both Wilton and Norwalk. A city like Norwalk has vast numbers of events and issues, which require the attention of its state representatives. Wilton is therefore deprived of having a representative whose foremost priority is Wilton and who has the available time to devote to its interests.

To my understanding, Wilton is the only town of its size without a representative who can make Wilton his/her top priority. In fact, both Wilton and Norwalk would be much better served by grouping Wilton together in the same district with another small town with similar interests, such as Ridgefield or Redding.

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