



State of Connecticut  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
STATE CAPITOL  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

Fairfield Board of Selectmen  
Fairfield Board of Education  
Fairfield Board of Finance

Dear Fairfield Town Leaders,

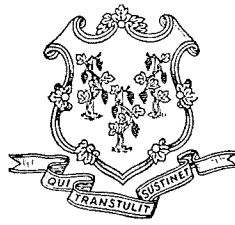
As we begin the 2019 CT General Assembly Legislative Session, we are eager to work with our colleagues at the state and local level to find pragmatic solutions to the problems we face in Connecticut. One of the most significant issue we must deal with in Hartford is the State Budget Deficit. Recently we have been working in a bipartisan manner, and have passed historic budget bills in the last two years.

However, we still find ourselves in a precarious fiscal situation, and unfortunately, there are some who have tried in the past to solve the dilemma by foisting various costs onto our municipalities. We saw this last year when Governor Malloy attempted to zero-out ECS funding to towns all over Connecticut. Now, with Governor Lamont's comments on education funding in a recent interview that **"The more affluent school districts are going to have to do more on their own. I can't afford to subsidize everybody out there."** We worry that our towns may once again be forced to fight against unfair cuts to municipal education aid.

There are three areas related to Municipal Education Funding that are concerns for us, and any change or cut to any town will dramatically affect their overall town budget and possibly result in increased local property taxes to fill those deficits. *These changes may not occur, but we wanted to raise the flag so you are aware and ready to engage in proactive advocacy to inform our fellow state legislators that any changes that negatively impact your town are unacceptable.*

### **STATE TEACHERS PENSION BURDEN TO TOWNS**

In the past, it has been proposed to *"shift"* one third of the cost of teacher pensions onto our municipalities. Such a re-distribution would be a massive additional burden to our towns and would likely result in cuts to important programs and projects administered by



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local government. We made a promise to teachers that we would take care of them in retirement after foregoing social security eligibility, serving our communities and educating our children. It is unacceptable to consider forcing our municipalities to assume the financial burden for something that is an obligation made by the State.

#### **ECS FUNDING FORMULA**

It is the State's constitutional obligation to fund public schools in every municipality. The legislature just negotiated and passed into law a new Education Cost Sharing Formula. We will fight alongside our colleagues to ensure this ECS formula stays in place and that our schools get the funding they need and have a right to receive.

#### **SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION REIMBURSEMENT**

Our concerns also extend to reimbursement percentages for school construction projects. Municipalities will be hard pressed to take on the full cost of school construction that is necessary for the education of our youth, and we must ensure the state keeps this promise as well. Governor Lamont has not made any specific comments, however his prior comments lead us to believe this is certainly a possibility.

Any of these "cost shifts" would almost certainly result in de facto property tax increases. Connecticut residents are over-taxed and cannot afford higher state or local taxes. We look forward to working with you this year as we tackle these important issues for our communities. Please do not hesitate to contact our offices with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

State Senator Tony Hwang  
28th District

Rep. Brenda Kupchick  
132<sup>nd</sup> District

Rep. Laura Devlin  
134<sup>th</sup> District