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*The Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents, Inc.*

2/23/07

Education Committee Members  
CT. General Assembly - LOB  
Hartford, CT 06105

RE: SB1114

Dear Education Committee Members:

In 1979, the Connecticut Supreme Court in the landmark school finance case, Horton v. Moskill, ruled that Connecticut School funding formula needed to be fixed. At the time the State was paying 25% of the cost of education, and local towns and cities were footing 75% of the cost. The court ordered the legislature to fix problem since public education was a responsibility of the State. In response the legislature established the Guarantee Tax Base grant to fund public education. The target for funding was a 50-50 partnership between the State and local communities. This is in fact the norm throughout the United States.

In 1989, the legislature revised the formula, and renamed it the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) Grant. If this grant was allowed to work as designed, the State today would be providing an addition \$1 billion plus for K-12 public education. But overtime the legislature has elected to place a cap on the formula, and roll special education costs into the ECS grant. It should be noted that in 1989 the State was paying 45.5% of the total cost of public education but by 2004 the State's share had dropped to 39.5%. At the same time the cost of special education in Connecticut had risen from \$500 million to \$1.2 billion, and the State's share had dropped from 40.5% of the entire cost to 30.5% of the entire cost thus further pushing the cost of education onto our local communities.

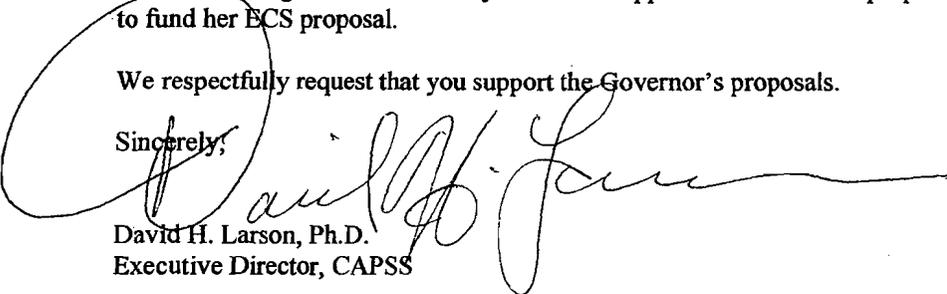
In order to properly fund public education which is very closely tied to the economic and social well-being of our State, Governor Jodi Rell has done the right thing by proposing to increase State support for public education. At the same time, she is proposing to increase accountability.

She is also proposing to minimally increase the State income tax on our wealthiest citizens to help fund her proposal. The increase in State funding for education will lessen the burden on local property taxes for individuals and business. It should be noted that property taxes are the most regressive form of taxation while a graduated income tax is the fairest form of taxation.

The Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents strongly supports the Governor's proposal on ~~ECS~~ funding and accountability. We also support the Governor's proposal to raise the State income tax to fund her ~~ECS~~ proposal.

We respectfully request that you support the Governor's proposals.

Sincerely,

  
David H. Larson, Ph.D.  
Executive Director, CAPSS

p.s. It should also be noted that the State Department of Education will need additional resources to implement this proposal.