



# State of Connecticut

## SENATE

STATE CAPITOL  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

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**MEMBER**  
FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE  
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Senator Harp, Representative Geragosian, Senator Debicella, Representative Minor and Members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Mike McLachlan, State Senator from the 24<sup>th</sup> District.

I'm here today to testify in support of **Proposed Senate Bill 3**, An Act Redefining Terms Concerning The Spending Cap. I'd like to thank Senator Debicella for introducing this measure and thank you, the committee, for considering this important bill as you deliberate solutions to the budget crisis we face in Connecticut. I submitted a similar proposal last year and you were kind enough to raise that bill for a public hearing.

On November 3, 1992, voters of Connecticut overwhelmingly approved an amendment to the Constitution of the State of Connecticut creating a constitutional spending cap. This amendment requires the General Assembly to fully implement the spending cap by defining the spending cap terms. These definitions must be enacted by a three-fifths vote in both the State Senate and State House of Representatives.

Nearly eighteen years have passed since the voters of Connecticut approved the spending cap, but the legislature has not yet taken the next step. I co-sponsored Proposed Senate Bill 3 hoping we can move forward with the will of the voters this session. I suggest that the Connecticut General Statutes be amended to redefine the "increase in personal income" to mean the increase in personal income for Connecticut residents as calculated by the U.S. Department of Commerce, the "increase in inflation" to mean the increase in the consumer price index for the preceding twelve-month period, according to the U.S. Department of Labor and to redefine "general budget expenditures" to mean all expenditures from all appropriated funds.

Some would suggest that we effectively have a spending cap by state statute. However, changing a statute is a relatively simple matter for the legislature. On the other hand, changes to our state Constitution demands a far more inclusive process including the direct participation of voters. It is clear that 18 years ago the voters of Connecticut spoke with one voice on this issue. The voters of Connecticut wanted the spending cap to be part of our Constitution.

I would also like to testify in opposition to **Proposed House Bill 5104**, An Act Directing The Program Review And Investigations Committee To Study The State Spending Cap. This bill directs PRI to study and evaluate both the constitutional and statutory spending caps. We already know that the constitutional cap was never fully implemented and as a result does not carry the full weight of a constitutional provision. Let us honor the will of Connecticut's voters and their vote nearly eighteen years ago. Let us take action this year to implement the constitutional cap on spending.

I hope we can move forward with Proposed Senate Bill 3 and fully implement Connecticut's constitutional spending cap. Thank you for your consideration of this measure.