

## CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICIALS (CASBO)

Testimony by David G. Lenihan  
Public Hearing of the Education Committee  
February 15, 2013

Representative Fleischman, Senator Stillman and members of the Education Committee, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on SB 876.

My name is David G. Lenihan and I am a retired Business Manager with over 14 years of experience in this field. I am also a past president of CASBO, a non-profit trade organization that represents school business officials (SBOs) that work in most of the 169 towns in Connecticut. I currently work for CASBO as its legislative liaison.

SBOs are responsible for most aspects of school business and operations. This includes, but not limited to, working closely with town officials on school construction projects and the related State grant reimbursement process.

I am here today to testify on Section 2 of SB 876 that recommends that the Department of Construction Services conduct a study of roof pitch requirements for school buildings. Please note that the legislation (PA 03-220), regarding roof pitch, was passed in 2003. As a result, we have had almost 10 years to review the issue and analyze the impacts. Architects and engineers have indicated for years and, have submitted testimony in the past, that there is no scientific evidence that the 1/2" per foot slope for school roofs has any direct correlation to improved indoor air quality, (the original intent of the legislation), and has resulted in significant increases in costs to both the individual towns and the State of Connecticut.

In 2011, as Business Manager for Regional School District # 10, I oversaw a roofing project for Harwinton Consolidated School. This roofing project cost over \$1.5 million. If we had been able to use 1/4" per foot pitch instead of the required 1/2" per foot pitch, the project would have cost about \$1 million. This represented a \$500,000 or 50% cost increase in cost for a small elementary school roof. Since the State reimbursed the Region for approximately 50% of the cost, the state's share of this cost increase was \$250,000.

Many other school districts throughout Connecticut have experienced or will experience even higher cost increases for their roofing projects resulting from this current legislation, including Fairfield (\$5M increase or 62%), Mansfield (\$1.5M or 92%) and South Windsor (in planning stage) to name a few.

It is also important to note that the initial legislation only applied to school building projects and that the administration of this legislation only addressed State grant approval. Also, the initial legislation did not change any of the state building codes and, therefore, a change to this legislation now would leave all of the building codes and other construction requirements in place.

I strongly recommend that the committee and the full legislature quickly act on this important issue. I understand there is another bill (HB6079) that proposes to amend the initial legislation to change the minimum roof pitch requirement from  $\frac{1}{2}$ " per foot to  $\frac{1}{4}$ " per foot for school building projects. The committee should bring this bill forward as expeditiously as possible and remove Section 2 from SB 876. I also suggest that the committee consult the School Facilities Unit to obtain further information with respect to this issue.

In summary, this is truly a win-win for our towns and the State of Connecticut. With no evidence of any benefit to IAQ from the current  $\frac{1}{2}$ " per foot roof pitch requirement and with significant and immediate savings that would be available for towns and the State in this time of very scarce resources, this change truly makes sense. No additional study is necessary or warranted.

Thank you