

Greetings

I have been an outspoken opponent of the Connecticut Minimum (Education) Budget Requirement law. I contacted my State Senator, Art Linares, a couple times concerning the need to eliminate this rule and received notice of proposed Bill 7019; an attempt to make it easier for some towns to reduce their education budgets if there is a reduction in enrollment.

Then I read the bill.

I will not take an approach so popular with liberals. I will not pretend this bill takes care of the problem and stop there. **THE ENTIRE MINIMUM BUDGET REQUIREMENT LAW MUST BE SCRAPPED.** If we must take a ridiculously slow step towards that goal, so be it. However, this bill represents little more than what is available to towns under the current law.

Towns pay a King's Ransom in salary and benefits to Superintendents of Schools. We have Boards of Education. Let the Superintendents earn their money and the Boards do their work, instead of merely rubber-stamping the desires of the Administrators. The MBR sets an artificial floor under yearly budget requests. It also encourages seeking to extract as much money as possible from taxpayers. The larger the request the powers that be can slide past the referendum voters in any given year, the more taxpayers will pay each and every year going forward. There could also be one-time or rarely recurring expenses in any given year and the taxpayers are forced to pay that much more 'forever.' On top of that, money spent for new schools is never included in the yearly request though, rest assured, it is a Bard of Education expense. In many cases, those new schools are billed as cost-effective due to energy use or smaller maintenance costs yet the amounts from the older schools are 'locked in' in perpetuity.

There are many more examples--such as non-return of surpluses to the town--that merely serve to bloat the budget for the Christmas Lists of those for whom the spent funds are NEVER enough. Those items never seem to appear in budgets but keep pumping up the budget year after year after. The MBR isn't even price-fixing, it's automatic price-increasing There is no protection for the taxpayers--period.

In the interest of brevity, I will close with this: I write this in support of Bill 7019. But, make no mistake, this bill is little more than a baby step down the necessary path to full repeal of the CT Minimum Budget Requirement Act.

Thank you for your time,

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