



## State of Connecticut

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

**REPRESENTATIVE MIKE FRANCE**  
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MEMBER

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS  
COMMITTEE

February 4, 2015 \* 1:00pm \* 2B

#### **Testimony on Proposed HB 5085 An Act Authorizing Oversight Over Noneducational Expenses In School Budgets By Municipal Boards Of Finance.**

Dear Chairmen Osten and Miller, Ranking Members Linares and Aman, and distinguished members of the Planning and Development Committee:

My name is Mike France and I am providing written testimony regarding the need for greater oversight by municipal Boards of Finance over non-educational expenses in school budgets. The intent of HB 5085 is to extend the work initiated by the General Assembly in passing Public Act (P.A.) 13-60, giving Boards of Finance, Boards of Selectmen or the appropriating authority ten (10) days to make spending recommendations and suggestions on consolidation of non-educational services and realize financial efficiencies.

Prior to being elected as a State Representative, I served for three (3) years as a Town Councilor in Ledyard, as well as the Chair of the Finance Committee. During that tenure, I observed many opportunities for consolidation of services that would have resulted in significant long-term savings to Ledyard residents and taxpayers. Unfortunately, none of these opportunities were considered nor would the Board of Education even discuss consolidation of services with the Town Council. P.A. 13-60 was a good first step but does not provide for any consideration of consolidation of non-educational services other than at the time of budget submission. Many times, the opportunity for savings is more likely to occur during personnel transition, which is rarely restricted to budget submission.

Providing an opportunity for greater oversight of non-educational expenses by Boards of Finance, Boards of Selectmen or the appropriating authority would result in direct savings to the taxpayers without sacrificing educational needs. In many cases, the Board of Education budget is over 70% of the total town budget with very little oversight once the budget has been approved. Connecticut General Statutes 10-222 provides reporting requirements on a monthly basis to the Boards of Finance, Boards of Selectmen or the appropriating authority concerning budget transfers performed during the previous month. However, these budget transfer reports do not provide opportunities to discuss consolidation of non-educational expenses.

Just like opportunities for regionalization of municipal services, such as dispatch, animal control and others, the consolidation of non-educational expenses will reduce the overhead cost of delivering these services and thus, result in savings to the ultimate customer, the local taxpayer.

Regards,

Mike France State Representative, 42nd Assembly District  
Ledyard, Preston, Montville