

I am questioning the 'fairness and economic development' aspects of this Bill, as they relate to Voluntown.

Almost 2/3's of our Town is the Pachaug State Forest. Our Town budget this year is \$8,012,702. It is expected that our budget will increase for the upcoming year. Yet, S.B No. 1 calls out Voluntown specifically capping our PILOT to just \$60,000. I question why Voluntown has been singled out?

This \$60,000, is only 7/10 of one percent of our budget-not even one percent!

The Voluntown dynamic that appears to be over looked by this Bill is several fold.

First, the Pachaug State Forest (the largest in our entire State with 24,000 acres), is primarily situated in Voluntown 14,000 acres. Visitors to Pachaug State Forest continue and increase in number year after year. The demands on our volunteer fire department for help by those in the Forest continue accordingly. Last year Voluntown tax payers had to pay for two fire department positions at the cost of \$90,000+.

Second, State police from the Montville barracks are called out also. In 2014 we had 1043 recorded State Police call outs. Again with increase demand for police help in the State Forest resident State Troopers will lead to more taxes at \$120,000/trooper minimally plus costs for local Voluntown Trooper office.

Third, It is my understanding that the State is in the process of cutting back DEEP State Forest personnel which only adds to the above Fire Department and State Trooper increasing costs falling on the backs of our Voluntown tax payers.

These costs will continue to rise and the Bill caps Voluntown's PILOT is only a fraction of one percent of our budget.

How is 'TAX FAIRNESS'??

As this dynamic continues taxes will rise and the Mill Rate will increase. Property owners unable to pay these tax increases will be forced to sell, the real estate market, in turn recognizing higher mill rate will result in decreased property values and a steady economic decline in Voluntown's housing market will follow.

How is this 'ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT'?

I urge the committee not to accept this Bill.

Separately the Bill's directing vehicle tax revenue from Voluntown to the DRS is not acceptable.

It will result again in higher local taxation to make up for lost revenue.

As an example of how the State will not compensate Voluntown fairly for this revenue stream, simply refer to how our PILOT revenue has been declining even to the point of this very Bill!

Best Regards,

**Jack Wesa**

REALTOR/Broker

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