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Follow-up Testimony for Planning & Development Committee February 19, 2016 Public Hearing

In opposition to HB 5175 An Act Concerning Local Board of Education Budgets

At the February 19th public hearing, Robert P. Giesen testified on behalf of the Connecticut Association of School Business Officials (CASBO) in opposition of HB5175. We greatly appreciate the opportunity to weigh in on this important matter. There were a few issues raised to which we would like to offer additional information.

School District Annual Budgets

CASBO collects a great deal of demographic, financial and related data on Connecticut's school districts. With an average of over 90 school districts reporting each year, these are the average school district budget increases which demonstrates that local educational budgets have averaged less than 2% while attempting to maintain the high expectations for student achievement:

2015-16	1.5%
2014-15	1.3%
2013-14	1.6%
2012-13	1.4%
2011-12	1.2%

Cooperative Efforts

In 2015, a taskforce of CASBO volunteers conducted a research project regarding the efforts that school districts are making to engage in shared services with municipalities, RESCs, and other school districts to increase efficiency and effectiveness. In the survey, 94% of responding districts participate in some type of shared services or purchasing with another district, RESC or town. Over 92% participate in at least 3 areas and 76% participate in 5 or more areas of shared services or purchasing. The resulting report can be accessed via: https://view.flipdocs.com/?ID=10010516_314017

Further, the MORE Commission charged the Office Program Review and Investigations to study "regional cooperation between local boards of education". CASBO worked with the PRI staff on data review, interviews, and materials collected during our study. The PRI materials may be accessed via: https://www.cga.ct.gov/pri/2015_RCA.asp

Upon a review of these studies, you will see the breadth of efforts undertaken by school districts in this area.

We hope that you find this information helpful. Should you have any questions or require further clarification, please contact CASBO's Executive Director, Sharon Bruce, at 860.519.0023 or ssbruce@comcast.net.