



# Fairfield University

*Office of the President*

Mark R. Nemec, PhD  
*President*

## Testimony for the Finance Revenue & Bonding Committee An Act Concerning Deposits in Lieu of Taxes (SB1137)

April 29, 2019  
Submitted by Fairfield University

We appreciate the opportunity to present our views on behalf of Fairfield University on **Senate Bill 1137: An Act Concerning Deposits in Lieu of Taxes**, which, seeks to use deposits in lieu of taxes to implement certain community restoration and revitalization efforts by requiring non-profit organizations to pay a fee to the State to be utilized by local credit unions for these initiatives.

We strongly oppose this bill as Fairfield University's contributions to the community and the economic benefits that the University generates are already critical to restoration and revitalization efforts in our region, and monies allocated for such a proposal would necessarily reduce the economic investment that the University currently undertakes, and will necessarily compel the University to pass on additional costs to our students and their families, many of whom live in the region.

- The Economic Impact of Fairfield University is close to \$2Billion dollars annually. Over HALF of the University's alumni base lives in the State of CT (20,000+) with a large portion in Fairfield County and the Town of Fairfield. Our students leave Fairfield, and regularly live and work in the State, bringing significant impact. Our employees and contractors spend significant dollars in the town, and the benefit of our student renter community significantly benefits the town of Fairfield.
- Municipalities throughout the state benefit from the economic impact of having colleges and universities located in their region. The student and employee population at Fairfield University is over 6,000 people, and each person contributes to spending in the local economy. There are approximately 20,000 University alumni residing in the State who contribute to the economic activity in Connecticut. Further, there are many on-campus events, which bring visitors to campus and generate several million dollars of spending each year. The direct spending by employees, students, and visitors is estimated to be in excess of \$1,180,702,011.
- Capital projects at Fairfield University have average approximately \$10 million each year and require the University to pay building and permit fees. These capital projects benefit the local labor pool and generate taxable revenue. The University also spends in excess of \$58 million annually in purchasing supplies. In the aggregate, the economic impact of the direct and indirect spending of University-related activities equals hundreds of millions of dollars, all of which provide tax revenue for the state and local government.

- Additionally, the University has been undergoing tremendous growth in recent years, and has invested over \$220 Million in new buildings and facilities.
- Fairfield University's use of local services is quite limited. Further, the University pays for police, fire and security services for all on-campus events where these services are required. The University also pays for an officer three evenings a week in an off-campus location where student living is prevalent.
- Fairfield University currently makes significant contributions, financial and in-kind, to the surrounding municipalities and residents. Currently Fairfield University provides pool and space accommodations weekly for the Fairfield Fire Department ongoing training; we provide both the Town and the State space for canine training; we provide classroom space for training and exams; we provide first-responder housing for families when needed; we provide space to elected officials for town-halls and other group meetings; to name a few. The University is a sponsor of major events in the local community, and provides over 5,000 hours of community services through student clubs and organizations.

We are empathic to the fiscal challenges our local municipalities are facing however this proposal would lead to increased tuition costs for our students and their families, who are already significant contributors to the town economy.

We strongly urge you not to move this legislation forward. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark R. Nemec', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark R. Nemec, PhD  
President  
Professor of Politics