



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

April 26, 2019

Dear Senator Fonfara, Representative Rojas and member of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony related to the S.B 1137, AN ACT CONCERNING DEPOSITS IN LIEU OF TAXES. I am strongly opposed to this bill, requiring our YMCA to pay a tax to the State Treasurer would have a very significant impact on the ability of the Westport Weston Family YMCA and all of Connecticut's YMCAs to continue to strengthen our communities.

In 2018, the 21 Connecticut Ys, which includes 36 branches and over 175 program sites, distributed \$11 million in financial assistance and over the past five years that amount is over \$60 million in aid to families in need. The Westport Weston Family YMCA alone provided \$508,000 to 1,800 individuals in 2018 and these dollars taught children how to be safe around water, attend summer camp while parents were working so they could support their family, and attend our after school program to name a few. We continue to support our local community by partnering with Westport Human Services and Weston Social Services to provide assistance to families that depend on the services they receive from them. Last year, 5 children were identified by the town of Westport to attend summer camp including pre and post care for the entire summer at no cost to their parents/guardians. This was due to the support of generous donors to the financial assistance program at the Y.

Through our community partnerships special needs individuals have a place to be included and work out, learn to be around water in a safe environment, play on organized sports teams staffed with trained individuals to teach them and be included in the day to day life in our town. Through our financial assistance program seniors are able to socialize and take classes that help them live safer and healthier lives. By passing S.B 1137, AN ACT CONCERNING DEPOSITS IN LIEU OF TAXES all those that depend on the 501 c3 organizations including YMCAs in Connecticut will be impacted the most. I along with the over 8,000 employees of the YMCAs in Connecticut strongly urge you to not move forward with S.B 1137. This bill would severely impact the ability of Connecticut's YMCAs to help those in our communities that need us the most.

Thank you for your consideration in not moving forward with S.B 1137.

Pat Riemersma

CEO Westport Weston Family YMCA

WESTPORT WESTON FAMILY YMCA

14 Allen Raymond Lane
Westport, CT 06880
P 203 226 8981 F 203 226 2607
www.westportymca.org