

Testimony regarding Connecticut's Constitutional Cap on spending

From former Senator Edward W. Munster, D-33

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I was a member of the State Senate representing the 33<sup>rd</sup> Senatorial District when the income tax was passed and signed by the Governor. I voted against this tax. My reason for voting against the income tax was that I was convinced that providing a new source of revenue to the legislature would only result in uncontrolled spending in future years.

People were told at the time that passing the income tax would be a temporary measure to get the state past a deficit in that year of almost \$500,000,000 and could be repealed once the deficit had been paid off. Only a fool would believe that this would happen.

The public was so outraged by the passage of the income tax and the prospect of uncontrolled spending in Connecticut that the legislature passed a bill to allow a Constitutional Amendment instituting a cap on state spending be voted upon in a statewide referendum. The referendum passed by a huge margin of Connecticut's voters but it has never been properly implemented. Legislators move items off budget and change definitions of what items fall under the budget cap to allow the cap on spending to go unchecked. It has been a sad joke played on the taxpayers of Connecticut.

I urge that this commission to recommend a cap with teeth and not allow this joke of a spending cap to continue.

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