

Enough is enough! As Marlborough's First Selectman, I join Connecticut's other small towns in urging Governor Malloy to immediately sign the recently adopted budget that sits on his desk. While more significant reforms are needed for the long term economic health of our state, we need a budget NOW which does not include catastrophic cuts to our schools or our citizens!

SMALL TOWNS CALL ON GOVERNOR TO SIGN BUDGET

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST), by unanimous vote of its Board of Directors, is calling on Governor Malloy to sign the budget recently adopted by the state legislature.

"Small towns throughout Connecticut are facing tremendous uncertainty about how cuts in state aid may impact their communities. Due to delays in adopting a state budget, towns have already lost out on a significant amount of funding for needed road repair and infrastructure projects," said Leo Paul, First Selectman of Litchfield and COST President.

"Now towns are facing deep cuts in education funding and other municipal aid programs under the Governor's Resource Allocation Plan. Given the magnitude of these cuts, towns are very concerned about the impact on our schools, our children, and on our property taxpayers," Paul added.

"Unfortunately, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to cut local education budgets at this point in the fiscal year. As a result, many towns may be forced to issue supplemental tax bills to make up the difference," explained Betsy Gara, Executive Director, COST.

"If the Governor's Resource Allocation Plan remains in effect, property taxes are projected to increase by 20-30% in some of Connecticut's smaller communities, imposing an untenable hardship on many struggling households," said Gara.

"Connecticut needs a budget now - a budget that does not devastate our schools and our communities by slashing municipal aid or shifting teachers' pension costs onto already overburdened property taxpayers," said Paul.

"The budget adopted by the state legislature will ensure that education and other critical local services can be provided without disruption. It will also allow towns to move forward with road and infrastructure projects that are vital to our state and local economies. It also provides communities with the certainty needed to govern effectively," added Paul.

According to an analysis prepared on behalf of COST, under Governor Malloy's Resource Allocation Plan:

- In total, cuts in Education Cost Sharing (ECS) grants from Fiscal Year 2017 levels amount to \$557 million, equating a 27% drop in funding;**
- Based on cuts in ECS funding and overall municipal aid levels, property taxes are projected to increase by more than \$500 per year for homeowners in more than 90 small towns;**
- In 28 towns, property taxes are projected to increase by more than \$1,000 per year and in 64 towns by more than \$750 per year;**

- The proposed cuts in ECS funding and overall municipal aid levels have the potential to trigger double digit increases in more than 80 towns in Connecticut.

"Signing the budget that was adopted by the state legislature will protect our communities from these devastating cuts which will force steep hikes in property taxes and the disruption of vital services," said Paul.

Amy Traversa
First Selectman

26 North Main Street
P.O.Box 29
Marlborough, CT 06447

(860)295-6204 (office)
(860)771-1134 (cell)

firstselectman@marlboroughct.net