

Act Number	Session	Bill Number	Total Number of Committee Pages	Total Number of House Pages	Total Number of Senate Pages
PA 71-25		942	3	3	3
<u>Committee Pages:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Appropriations 611-613</i> • <i>Education 455-458</i> 				<u>House Pages:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 996-998 	<u>Senate Pages:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 557-559

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**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE**

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indicate by saying aye, those opposed. The amendment is adopted and it is ruled technical and we now have to proceed on the bill as amended. Will you remark further? If not, the question is on acceptance and passage as amended by Senate Amendment Schedule "A". All those in favor indicate by saying aye, those opposed. The bill, as amended, is passed.

MBS

THE CLERK:

Calendar 157. Substitute for Senate Bill No. 0942. An Act Concerning State Grants and Loans for School Building Projects. File 76.

DARIUS J. SPAIN, 166th District:

Mr. Speaker, I move acceptance of the committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question is on acceptance and passage, will you remark?

DARIUS J. SPAIN, 166th District:

Mr. Speaker, this bill is to fund the state portion of the school building program which was enacted in 1969. The amount provided here is calculated to take care of any application, approved and or expected to be approved, by the end of June, 1971. I move its passage.

FRANCIS J. COLLINS, 165th District:

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to rise in support of this particular bill. Some three or four weeks ago we had another measure before us from the Appropriations Committee which allocated for the current biennium some \$9 million, which

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together with this bonding bill will make a total of \$90 million MBS to add to the 1969 act on state grants for the school building project. It was unfortunate that when we passed the bill in 1969 we were millions and millions of dollars short in our estimates on what would be needed to take care of the applications that we would get over the next two years. But I think we owe a debt of gratitude, not only to the people in this House for making good on that commitment that we made in 1969, but also to Governor Meskill who, some month and a half ago, indicated that it was his intention to fully fund the program started in 1969. I heartily urge its adoption.

CARL R. AJELLO, 118th District:

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the bill and I'm quite pleased to indicate that I was the original sponsor of this idea in the last session of the General Assembly. An idea, incidentally, which was scoffed at by those experts who told me that the bill was going noplac in the beginning of the session and later that very bill did become the law of our state and I would hope that someday we'll be able to extend this to 100% funding and standardized school building plan and many other things that I think are important for the state to do. I'd like, while taking that kind of credit, to also point out that they were not my figures that were used and led to this terrible problem of some towns not having enough money. I think that the Governor, in this instance at least, has acted responsibly in fulfilling a commitment of the legislature and I

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am glad that we have this bill before us today.

MBS

GUIDO LA GROTTA, 170th District:

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to concur with remarks of the Minority Leader and I would just like to say in passing that since a number of my towns are involved in this hold up of funds that I would like to extend to the Finance Committee thanks for their swiftness in calling this bill up for hearing and expediting these people out of a very difficult position.

MR. SPEAKER:

Are there further remarks? If not, the question is on acceptance and passage in concurrence with the Senate. All those in favor indicate by saying aye, those opposed, the bill is passed.

THE CLERK:

Calendar 158. Substitute for Senate Bill No. 1023. An Act Concerning Hand Signals by Motorists. File 50.

DAVID J. SULLIVAN, JR., 130th District:

Mr. Speaker, I move acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

MR. SPEAKER:

Motion is on acceptance and passage in concurrence with the Senate, will you remark?

DAVID J. SULLIVAN, JR., 130th District:

Mr. Speaker, this simple defines the signals to be used in three instances and the operation of motor vehicles on the highway. Connecticut is the only state of the 50 that has not

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who have an interest in the child. At the present time the law does not spell out that they have this right. I believe that its a humane bill and I urge its passage.

THE CHAIR:

The question is on the passage of the H.B. 7143 as amended. Will you remark further? Senator Rome.

SENATOR ROME:

Mr. President, I think if we catagorize, I think that this is a children's bill. The courts have been very concerned about the welfare of the child and this is the criteria which they generally use. We recognize that the welfare of the child sometimes lies in visititation or Custody rights being with other than the parents. And I think that the bill is an exceptionally good bill in that direction. I urge passage.

THE CHAIR:

The question is on passage of the H.B. 7143 as amended. Will you remark further? Hearing no further remarks, all those in favor of the passage of this bill as amended, signify by saying aye. AYE. Opposed nay. The vote in the affirmative. The bill is passed.

THE CLERK:

Middle of the page please, Calendar No. 61, File No. 76. Favorable Report Joint Standing Committee on Finance, Substitute S. B. 942 An Act Concerning State Grants and Loans for School Building Projects.

SENATOR CHIARLONE:

Mr. President, I move for acceptance of the bill for immediate consideration and passage of the bill.

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THE CHAIR:

The motion is acceptance of the report on the bill and passage.

Senator Cutillo.

SENATOR CUTILLO:

Mr. President, this bill represents the estimated amount of grant requirements under Sec. 2 of P.A. 751 of the 1969 Session of the General Assembly. It is an authorization to issue bonds to the state in the amount of 81,755,000,00. to approve grant commitments by the State Bond Commission applications received to June 30, 1971. I move acceptance of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

The motion is on the passage of the bill. Will you remark further?

Senator Ives.

SENATOR IVES:

Mr. President, I rise to very happily support this bill which carries the commitment of the 1969 Session of the General Assembly. In which towns in good faith have started school building projects and are anxiously awaiting the passage of this bill to receive their reimbursement.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Hammer.

SENATOR HAMMER:

I too rise not only to support this bill, but to say how relieved I am. As a member of the interim Regulations Revue Committee I report that the Regulations Revue Committee struggled with this matter. And we ran into adamant and what we considered unreasonable opposition on the way this law was carried out by regulations. Which was our responsibility. So now it is

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corrected and I am very happy about it.

THE CHAIR:

The question is on the passage of S.B. 942. Will you remark further? Hearing no further remarks let those in favor of this bill signify by saying aye. AYE. Those opposed nay. Its a vote in the affirmative. The bill is passed.

SENATOR CUTILLO:

Mr. President, I move for suspension of the rules for immediate transmittal to the House.

THE CHAIR:

The motion is for suspension of the rules for immediate transmittal to the House. If there is no opposition, it is so ordered.

THE CLERK:

Third item from the bottom of page 2, Calendar No. 67, File No. 35. Favorable Report Joint Standing Committee on General Law on H.B. 5074 An Act Authorizing Elsie Gould To Bring An Action Against The Town of Manchester.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Strada.

SENATOR STRADA:

I move for acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on acceptance of the Committee's Report and passage of the bill. Will you remark?

SENATOR STRADA:

Mr. President, this bill validates a defective notice against the

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First Selectman Heimann: (continued): for financing school construction by passing Public Act 751. For the first time, lump-sum payments at the completion of construction were provided, instead of contributions to the town's debt service over the period of the bonds. Unfortunately, only seven months after this new program was first passed, the request for funds was already double the appropriation for the entire biennium. Municipalities which had counted on the funds were not able to get this necessary assistance. School building programs in some communities were delayed, or the towns had to absorb the extra cost. This time in this session our cities and towns must be assured of all the necessary funds. And, we trust that substitute Senate Bill #942 increasing the bond appropriation of \$160,000,000 to \$240,000,000, it's already passed the Senate, or receive favorable action and will assure this availability of funds. But, there is a particular problem that does need attention. It is quite clear, in our opinion, that the present law now covers major renovation of existing schools. Unfortunately, the State Department of Education has been unwilling to give such assistance unless there is a major addition or a conversion of a school. Most older municipalities in Connecticut, particularly inner-city areas, have schools in need of major renovation. Renovation will cost much less than replacement and will provide effective service. Without State assistance, the cities are forced to spend their own funds, or else the needed renovation work is just not done, and further deterioration occurs. If this cannot be worked out on an administrative basis with the Education Department, as it should be, and I'll have to say that recent efforts on our part to do this have not been truthful. Then the statute should be amended to make clear the Department's duty. And, if this Committee would like, we would be happy to provide a memorandum giving further details in this matter. Adequate school facilities are a number one priority. A fully funded school construction grants and loan program, which covers both new construction and major renovation, is an effective way to meet this goal. Speaking for the subject School Transportation, there is no question but we need additional assistance in this area. Transportation costs, like all other school costs, have skyrocketed. Going from \$14,500,000 in '67-'68, '68-'69 they went to \$18,000,000 an increase of some 24%, and certainly we can expect that in this coming year there will be another increase. As a matter of fact, our own Town of Trumbull just opened bids a short time ago and the increase there was \$34 per day for bus to \$44 per day for bus. An increase to

First Selectman Heimann (continued): the Town of Trumbull of some \$80,000. Our local governments cannot afford to pay for these increased costs. Education costs take up 2/3rd's of the budget as it stands. The only source of revenue, of course, you know is the property tax. We believe that the State should pay at least half of the transportation costs, and not be limited to an average of \$20 per pupil annually. We believe that the State should provide transportation to vocational schools and to pre-kindergarten programs. We believe that both programs are vital and necessary parts of the State's comprehensive educational system. We believe that instead of the 2/3rd's presently allowed for transportation for special education, that this should be a fully funded program by the State. And further, and this would comment to all of the programs of reimbursement, that exist, we believe that it should be on a current basis-either on a quarterly basis-but certainly not remaining at the end of the calendar year as the case now. We urge you to support these principles. And, finally I would like to speak to the average daily membership grants. I think we are all aware and agreed that more State aid to the cities is a necessity. The State of Connecticut still ranks first among all states in income per capita, but only 44th in assistance to local education. The costs of this local education have indeed arisen alarmingly. They were over 2½ times as high in '69 as in '60. We can't find the sources of revenue in our own communities to meet this need. Counter to the national trend, the share of education costs paid by Connecticut's municipal governments has risen by almost 12% in the last four years. Also counter to the national trend, the State's share of local education in Connecticut has gone down by 9½% in the same period. In most other states, the State has assumed a greater share of this burden, and the national average has gone up by 1.7. State aid to education has not picked up with the growth. The cost in municipality in Connecticut must catch up. If we are to meet these urgent educational needs, a substantial increase in ADM is an absolute necessity. Just to bring Connecticut to the national average would require a \$600 A.D.M. grant. We believe that the national average certainly is a reasonable goal to shoot for. We may not be able to do it in a year, but it's certainly a goal to shoot for. If we were to just double our present grant, we would still be only 2/3rd's of the national average. Or if we were to consider what a former speaker said here today, of an increase of \$100, it would only still bring us to 50% of the national average and we do need

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First Selectman Heimann (continued): this additional assistance. We believe that the ADM formula should be adjusted to be more responsive to the different needs in our various communities. The growth grant should be reinstated to aid the fast-growing communities. Any community, such as our own in Trumbull, which has grown so substantially from 10,000 to 20,000 to 30,000 in the period of two census decades, has other needs that take considerable sources of revenue. And, for the removal of the growth grant two years ago, in our consideration, was an imposition on those communities who have grown substantially. We would like to see that growth grant reinstated. And, similar extra ADM assistance should be provided for pupils residing in public housing. Such an addition would recognize that extra education services are needed by such children and that public housing withdraws money from the municipal tax base. And, therefore, they are less able to support their educational program. You have or will have before you, bills that will take care of both of these situations. We urge this Committee to support an ADM grant, increased in sufficient measure to meet the critical education needs of our municipalities, and made flexible to take into account the varying situations of both inner-cities and growing suburban towns. Thank you.

Chairman Cohen: Thank you. Any questions by any members of the Committee? The next speaker will be Mayor Hugh Curran of Bridgeport.

Mayor Hugh Curran: Mr. Cohen, members of the Committee, my name is Hugh Curran. I am the Mayor of Bridgeport and the-a member of the Executive Board of the Connecticut Conference of Mayors. I would like to address myself here this morning to two topics, (1) Aid for the Disadvantaged Children and also Special Education. However, before doing so, I would like to remark briefly on the question of State construction grants where older schools are re-modeled or completely renovated. I'm sure you're aware of the tremendous cost of land acquisition in urban areas today. For instance, we are building a middle school in Bridgeport and about two years ago we began to put the site together and acquire the land. Our estimate at that time was that the site would cost-the site alone now, nothing else- would cost \$1,200,000 and I dare say now, it probably will cost in excess of a million and half dollars. The tremendous cost of acquiring a site in an urban area, in the central cities would warrant the renovation of existing school buildings,

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We would be pennywise, and pound foolish if we didn't increase the grant. Really \$300 is not a bad sum. I think that this would go towards the eventual goal that I was speaking of a little earlier. Let's not fool ourselves, raising the ADM grants \$50 or \$60 will not go a long way towards improving education, most of the money will go into the general fund and very little of it, actually, will result in increased programs. But, if we do take this step, eventually we can turn to the full absorption - as I mentioned earlier, of the complete costs of education. So this is about all I have to say. I do want to say that I am very strongly in favor of increasing this grant. Thank you very much.

Rep. Klebanoff: George Vitelli.

George Vitelli: Superintendent of Schools - Milford.

I would like to speak on behalf of increasing the ADM grant and I also would like to speak in favor of HB5181, increasing grants for school building..

I find no rationale to the present system of funding for a new school vs. a school addition. The square foot costs are no different. Communities willing to meet their educational responsibilities by keeping up with their communities growth in building new schools are being discriminated against financially. I strongly recommend that a flat rate of 50% be allocated to both new and school additions. For example, the problem faced by communities - we are presently building an elementary school at the cost of 1.8 million dollars. We will qualify for \$480 thousand in state grants. If we were to take that same educational requirement and attach it to an existing building we would qualify for a return of \$900,000. The inequity is obvious. The formula, as it now stands, forces communities to make decisions based on financial rather than educational considerations. Thank you.

Rep. Klebanoff: Dr. McDonald.

Dr. Robert McDonald: Chairman of the Board of Education of the Shepaug Valley Regional School District No. 12. I am speaking in support of SB942; HB6959 and any bills of similar nature.

The Shepaug Valley Regional School Dist. 12, the first K-12 regional school district in Connecticut, was formed in 1968 by bringing together the schools of the towns of Bridgewater, Roxbury and Washington. Since the formation of the region, the district has had to use a considerable amount of marginal space, rented space and several portable classrooms to house the student body. At the present time there are 26 such spaces in use as classrooms.

Last October the people of the region turned out in great numbers for a school building referendum. They voted approval of a new building by a four to one margin in order that the children of the region could get out of these temporary facilities and receive an improved education program. Many public meetings were held prior to the referendum, at which time the board and administration informed the voters regarding P.A.751 and its provision for state support equal to 80% of school construction costs for a K-12 region. During these meetings it was explained that under this act the district would be paid these monies by the state in such a manner that the cost for the construction could be borne by the district

with a minimal additional cost for short term borrowing. The people, acting on this factual information, provided bonding for the execution of all grants in aid applications and for financing the district's share of the construction cost.

Ground was broken immediately after the successful referendum and the contractor began the construction job. The contractor has been pushing the job very hard, which is certainly to the best interests of the district, but as a result of the rapid work on the project, he had completed over \$500,000 work on the job by January 1st. The January requisition was nearly \$400,000 and we have been informed by the contractor that each requisition for the next few months will run \$500,000 or more.

After the referendum, all applications and forms were filed with the State Department of Education as rapidly as possible. The Board of Education had every reason to believe that the state bond commission meeting on January 21, 1971 would approve the commitment for our project and that we would receive our first payment on the grant from the state by March 15th. It was anticipated that by this date our short term borrowing funds would be substantially exhausted and the grant funds would be needed to meet our construction requisitions. If they are not received by March 15th, the district will have to undergo the extra cost of additional short term borrowing.

The Board of Education of Regional School District 12 has been informed that the state bond commission met on January 21, 1971 but did not approve the commitment for our construction project. We have been told that further commitment authorizations will be withheld until the legislature provides additional bonding authorization. We believe such action by the legislature should be a first order of business, a commitment should be made for our project immediately and that the State Department of Education should be directed to speed payment of all funds due to date under P.A. 751.

The Board of Education and administration have been honest and straight forward with the citizens of the region in discussing the building project, the commitment of the state under P.A.751 and the financial obligations and tax payers of the district assumed with the approval of the referendum. The Board acted in good faith in presenting the construction project. The people living and owning property in the region acted in good faith in assuming responsibility for their share of the construction costs. We are all waiting impatiently for the state to make good on its commitment.

The Board of Education must continue to be forthright in discussing the problem with the public. The taxpayers have been informed that the state has failed to make good on its commitment of construction funds for our project. They will also have to be told that the additional unanticipated cost for short term borrowing that will add to their tax burden is a direct result of failure on the part of the state government to provide the district with construction cost funds in keeping with a calendar that the Board and administration had every right to expect the state to maintain. We believe the failure on the part of the state to provide these funds as provided for in P.A.751 constitutes a serious breach of faith. We strongly urge the members of this committee to act immediately to rectify this serious matter.

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Rep. Audrey Beck: Dr. McDonald is it possible to get the figures and information regarding short term borrowing in connection with this construction. Could we have this information for the record possibly.?

Dr. McDonald: I will see that this information is sent to your committee.

(Following is copy of letter transmitted to Hearing Secretary in regard the above request.)

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To The Education Committee:

Dr. Charles M. Northrup, Superintendent of Schools, has asked that the following information be sent to you regarding the cost to the Shepaug Valley Regional School District No. 12 for short term borrowing in connection with its construction. He advised that you requested this information at the Education Committee Hearing on February 18, 1971 held at the State Capitol Building in Hartford.

<u>Gross Cost (interest paid to date)</u>	<u>Interest Received (on investments to date)</u>	<u>Net Cost of Short Term Borrowing to Date</u>
\$37,408.75	\$19,505.82	\$17,902.93

Sincerely,

Mrs. John B. Whittlesey
(Frances R.)

(note: a copy of this letter is in the file of supporting papers for this hearing.)

Rep. Klebanoff: George A. Barbarito.

George A. Barbarito: I am Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Business in New Haven. I urge the committee to give favorable support to increase the State Aid Grant Per Pupil.

At the outset, I should like to make it abundantly clear that I am not here to over dramatize the fiscal plight of the inner-city schools. Our operation is costly and our operation is extremely essential.

The erosion of the tax base is not a myth -- it is a realistic problem that confronts us today. Our present operating budget in New Haven is \$25,760,000 -- in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1972, it will be approximately \$29,000,000. There is no "baking powder" in this figure -- it is a direct result of spiralling costs of materials and supplies and negotiated salary increases which we tried to circumvent, even to the point of incurring a thirteen day teacher's strike.

The City of New Haven has a grand list of \$638,900,000 with a tax exempt list of \$9,780,000 which yields a net taxable grand list of \$629,120,000. Latest figures from our assessor's office indicate only an increase of \$4,000,000.

Our Mayor Guida is doing everything in his power to increase the grand list. Tacit evidence of this is the formation of the Tax-Exempt Committee which has scrutinized the list in an attempt to yield a higher taxable grand list, and also the Mayor's advocacy to tax some eleemosynary corporations. While some say this is a political risk, it does serve to emphasize the need for additional funds.

As the Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Business of the New Haven Board of Education, it would be presumptuous of me to ask you to support this bill without submitting facts relevant thereto.

There are approximately 660,000 public school children in Connecticut. Therefore, for every increase of multiples of \$50.00, it will cost \$33,000,000. I call your attention to the fact that the current per pupil grant is applicable to all 169 towns and cities, i.e. - urban, suburban, and rural regardless of disparities in cost, social problems, and learning problems.

Now, where will this money come from? It is obvious to every taxpayer that the money has to come from taxes -- be it an increase in sales taxes, cigarette taxes, gasoline taxes, or "piggy back" taxes. The relative merits of the method of implementation can be argued well into the night.

However, I strongly urge that the members of this Education Committee review the revenues to be derived from these taxes, and insist that the revenue sharing be invested in our most cherished human capital -- the children of the State of Connecticut.

Rep. Klebanoff: Robert Morra.

Robert Morra: I speak today in favor of HB5599 and HB6446. We feel that they will provide a sensible and adequate means of maintaining the high quality of education in this state. We all share and support the Governor's concern for the budget control, but we feel not to substantially increase the per pupil grant would be a crime to our children and our already over-taxed property owner.

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Committee as a reminder - our greatest natural resource are our children. Cut them short with a false economy would be a tragedy. Thank you.

Rep. Klebanoff: Morris Nirenstein.

Morris Nirenstein: Mr. Chairman and Ladies and Gentlemen of the Committee I would like to echo a statement that was made by a previous speaker - that many programs in education are in jeopardy if there isn't more aid forthcoming from the state. I know this for a fact in the town in which I teach - Regional 4 covering Cheshire, Deep River, and Essex.