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abs

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House of Representatives

Tuesday, May 3, 1988

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Clerk, please continue with the call of the Calendar.

CLERK:

Page 6, Calendar 617, Substitute for Senate Bill 539. AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL FINANCE. (As amended by Senate Amendments "A", "B", and "C"). Favorable Report of the Committee on APPROPRIATIONS.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Naomi Cohen.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill, in concurrence with the Senate.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The question is on acceptance and passage. Will you remark, madame?

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Yes, thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, today is National Teacher Day. This observance is an opportunity for teachers and for all of us in the community to renew our joint commitment to educational excellence.

Today, we embark on Connecticut's third wave of education equity. The first wave began in 1979, with

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the Horton Mescal decision and the GTB formula. That wave brought us both good news and bad news. The good news was that the disparity that had continued to grow between spending and districts, before Horton Mescal, finally stopped. The bad news was that the disparity did not start to decline appreciably.

So, then we turned to wave two in 1986. After studying the disparity, we remembered that 60% of the gap was because of teacher salaries and teacher/pupil ratios. And, so, together, we passed the Education Enhancement Act. That act has seen some narrowing of the disparity. It has seen higher standards for teachers. But, the disparity is still not at a level which is acceptable, because we still see a 35 times difference between the resources for pupils. We see school tax rates that are 9 times, from the high town to the low town, and we see expenditures per pupil, which are double, from the highest spending town, to the lowest spending town.

Those results say that there is still a heavier burden on the taxpayers in the poorer towns and that their per pupil expenditures continue to be the lowest. This file addresses those issues. The file also addresses an immediate need that we have. Beginning in September in 125 of our communities will be negotiating

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teacher contracts.

This file contains a guarantee that the Education Enhancement Act, which is scheduled to expire at the end of the '88-'89 school year, will be continued. The promise we have made through that act will be a promise that we will keep. So, here we are with a new formula that first of all ties state funding to a required foundation level. It includes a measure of educational need as well as a measure of economic need. It guarantees that every town will receive annual increases. It provides a framework for comparable local tax rates toward the required education funding. It requires that all state aid must be spent for school purposes only.

It provides a phase-in in equal percentages over four years. It institutionalizes the funds of the Education Enhancement Act. It provides greater stability. It eliminates the roller coaster effect of GTB, which uses three year old data to determine grants, and it moves Connecticut closer to the national average regarding the state share of education spending. It distributes money to towns based on where students and their needs are located.

We are being asked to adopt the best effort of two years of bi-partisan work by the Education Equity

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Committee, by the State Board of Education, and by your Education Committee. I know that as we debate this, there will be amendments offered, that will give you opportunities to vote for more money for individual towns. I would suggest to you that the bi-partisan effort that has brought us to tonight requires that we go forward together with the file, as is.

No one claims that this is the perfect formula, but many believe that it brings us closer to equity. We would be remiss if we didn't recognize that that bi-partisan effort has included the work of Nancy Wyman and Bob Ward here in the House, of Kevin Sullivan and Ken Hampton in the Senate, and of our two former distinguished colleagues, Otto Newman and Michael Healgot. And, to all of them in particular, we all owe a debt of thanks.

Let me conclude by reminding this Chamber of what the question is. Let me suggest that the question is not: will education funding increase, because obviously the answer is yes. But, rather the question is: who will pay for that increase? Will it continue to be the local districts, or will the state continue to increase its share in that partnership? This file says that the state will continue to increase its partnership.

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Mr. Speaker, the Senate has adopted several amendments, and I would like to ask the Clerk to call LCO 4226, and may I be allowed to summarize?

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Clerk has in her possession LCO # 4226, designated Senate Amendment Schedule "A". Will the Clerk please call?

CLERK:

LCO 4226, designated Senate Amendment Schedule "A"
offered by Senator Sullivan.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Cohen.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Thank you. I move adoption, Sir.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

I believe you've requested permission to summarize, Madam. Will you please summarize.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Yes, I did do that and I'm sorry. Senate "A" makes technical corrections to the file where grants were recalculated and provides that in those areas where enhancement acts went to area services, that money has now been divided up to go to individual towns and I move adoption.

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DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The question is on adoption of Senate Amendment Schedule "A". Will you remark? Will you remark? If not, all those in favor of adoption of Senate "A" please indicate by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Those opposed indicate by saying no.

The ayes have it. Senate Amendment Schedule "A" is adopted.

Will you remark further?

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Clerk has an amendment, LCO 4220, previously designated Senate "B". May I ask that that amendment be called and I be allowed to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The Clerk is in possession of LCO No. 4220, previously designated Senate Amendment Schedule "B". Will the Clerk please call.

CLERK:

LCO 4220, designated Senate Schedule "B" offered by Senator Blumenthal, et al.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

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The lady has requested permission to summarize. Is there objection? Hearing none, Madam, please proceed.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, this amendment looks at the factor in the file and in the formula known as Education Enhancement Aid and provides that communities which have combined need factor based on AFDC as a percentage of students and Mastery as a percentage of students, will find themselves in that category.

This affects the City of Stamford and I move adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The question is on adoption of Senate Amendment Schedule "B". Will you remark further? Representative Ward.

REP. WARD: (86th)

Mr. Speaker, through you, I'm a little puzzled. Through you, a question to Representative Cohen. Representative Cohen, you indicated that we should go with the file copy because that, after all, is what the Education Committee and the Equity Committee voted on. Are you moving adoption or rejection of Senate Amendment Schedule "B"?

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Cohen, would you care to respond,

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Madam?

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Thank you, I'm moving adoption, through you, Sir.

REP. WARD: (86th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it's important to note that this amendment was in fact not something the Education Committee acted on, not something acted on by the Equity Committee and it's a tinkering with the formula. The opening statement said go with the file copy. This isn't part of the file copy. I don't think it's unreasonable amendment. I think it's a reasonable amendment and I think the concept that the Chamber ought to look at all amendments carefully and decide whether in fact they address needs. Do they address problems in the formula because although I think the formula is good, I don't think it's perfect.

I think this corrects one problem that was in that formula and I have one further question to be sure that I understand this change, through you, to the Chairman of the Committee.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Please frame your question, Sir.

REP. WARD: (86th)

Does this add additional funds to the file copy or does this supplant funds that are used somewhere else

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in the file copy?

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Cohen.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Through you, Mr. Speaker, it adds additional funds to the file copy.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Ward.

REP. WARD: (86th)

And just because several people asked me, to save them asking the question, if the Chairman could just indicate how much of that is the file copy.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Cohen.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Thank you. Through you, Mr. Speaker, I believe that the number is approximately \$140,000 in the first year of the formula.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Ward.

REP. WARD: (86th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. An additional question. As I understand this, what it gives is a 5% hold harmless to the City of Stamford because that community has a 20% concentration of need students. Is that the

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correct understanding of the amendment?

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Cohen.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Through you, Mr. Speaker, yes, you are correct, Representative Ward. If you average the AFDC percentage of students and the Mastery as a percentage of students for the City of Stamford, you find that the combination for them is 22.25% need factor, more than twice as much as any of the other 1% towns and that is the reason for this amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Ward.

REP. WARD: (86th)

As I indicated, I'll be supporting this amendment and I think it's important that the Chamber recognize that what it is saying that there are some problems with the file copy. Stamford was one of the communities that came to the Education Committee and said, "You haven't recognized our uniqueness." This amendment, to some extent, recognizes some unique problems there. I think it leaves out a couple of other towns that have unique problems and it could have been drafted better to take care of those, but I think that we can deal with that later this evening.

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DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Will you remark further on Senate "B"?

REP. JAEKLE: (122nd)

Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Jaekle.

REP. JAEKLE: (122nd)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I heard what the additional cost of the formula would be in the first year. I wonder if I could ask, through you, to the proponent of the amendment, what the increased cost of the formula would be when it is fully funded in the fourth year?

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Cohen, do you care to respond, Madam?

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Could I have the question repeated, through you, Sir?

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Jaekle.

REP. JAEKLE: (122nd)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that the answer to one question would be that this would cost \$140,000 more in the first year of the new formula, so

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I understand it will hit full funding in the fourth year of the formula. I'd like to know how much additional dollars this amendment is going to cost the state in the fourth year of the funding formula, through you, Mr. Speaker, to the proponent.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Cohen.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I don't have my calculator, but I'll explain to you, Representative Jaekle, how you figure it out. You take the base, plus the \$140,000 which is the 5% in year one. Then in year two, add 5% to whatever that number is. In year three, add 5% to whatever that new number is, and in year four, you add 5%.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Jaekle.

REP. JAEKLE: (122nd)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know Stamford's base. I could probably look it up from some computer run that I have. If \$140,000 is 5%, I gather we might be close to that additional in the second, third and fourth years. It starts adding up. It sounds like over \$500,000 to me in the fourth year of the formula. I want to point out to the members, I'm going to be

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quite candid, this side of the aisle intends to offer some amendments as well. They will be House Amendments. I know this is a Senate Amendment. I'm going to support the amendment. I know this has represented two year's work. It's gone through the Equity Committee and the Department of Ed and the Education Committee, but you know what, a Senator on the third floor of this building had an opportunity to talk to his colleagues and say, "Hey, I want to make a change to the formula so that my community would get some more money" and his colleagues on the third floor said, "We're willing to listen to you and if you make a case for a change in the formula, we're going to support you" and in fact they did.

So after two year's work in Equity Committee and Department of Education and Education Committee and Appropriations Committee, the Senate was able to amend this bill to benefit a community, one community in the State of Connecticut.

I'm going to support the change because I think in Stamford's case an interesting quirk was found, a method was, it's a little unique, it wasn't a change in the formula that might make sense throughout the State of Connecticut, but I think the Senators had the right to debate this bill and even to amend it, to not only

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shift monies around, but to even add to the bottom line after it had gone through the Appropriations process, not bad.

I don't think this Chamber should be denied this same opportunity to debate amendments to this very important education funding formula for the future of this state and the education in our communities to be denied the same rights as the Senators have. Now I'll support what they did because I think they made a case and it's been added to the bill. I'll support that, but please, I'm sorry there aren't more members here to realize what's being done. If the Senate has a right to amend this bill successfully, we should as well and I know we're really hitting the clock in the closing days.

This bill is important enough, if we pass an amendment, you've got to know it's going to go back to the Senate and if it makes sense, they're going to concur as well. We're concurring with their amendment. I think we should have the right to amend it here and they would concur with ours as well. I'll support the amendment. In fact, I'm going to support any members right to offer an amendment, debate it and if they prove their case, they'll deserve support as well because they're members of the General Assembly as

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well.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Will you remark further on Senate "B"? Will you remark further on Senate "B"? If not, all those in favor of adoption please indicate by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Those opposed indicate by saying no.

REPRESENTATIVES:

No.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The ayes have it. George Jepsen's cheerleading succeeded. The amendment is adopted.

Will you remark further on the bill?

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Cohen.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Clerk has an amendment, LCO 4437, previously designated Senate "C". Would the Clerk please call and may I be allowed to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

abs

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Representative Cohen, the Clerk has indicated that Senate "C", in his records, is LCO 4436.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

That is correct, Sir. I thought that's what I said. I'm sorry if I didn't.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The Clerk is in possession of LCO No. 4436, previously designated Senate Amendment Schedule "C". Will the Clerk please call.

CLERK:

LCO 4436, designated Senate Amendment Schedule "C"
offered by Senator Sullivan, et al.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The lady has requested permission to summarize. Is there objection? Hearing none, Madam, please proceed.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Thank you and let me make it perfectly clear that this amendment was not discussed at the Education Committee or at the Equity Committee. However, as you can see, it's a bipartisan amendment and as people continued to read through the file copy to understand the bill, it became clear that there was a technical glitch in how we fund regional school districts. We provide a bonus now only if your regional school district is a K-12 school district.

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This amendment makes that regional bonus applicable to a regional school districts and I urge a opinion.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The question is on adoption of Senate Amendment Schedule "C". Will you remark further? Representative Ward.

REP. WARD: (86th)

Just briefly, Sir, the Chamber notes, and I don't have the fiscal note in front of me, I assume that this is additional money, not a restructuring money, but just if I might ask how much additional money to the file copy this amendment calls for, through you, to the Chairman of Education.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Cohen.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Through you, Mr. Speaker. The fiscal note indicates that the passage of this amendment would result in a future state cost of approximately \$93,000 beginning in fiscal year 1990.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Ward.

REP. WARD: (86th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, frankly, I will admit, I'm somewhat puzzled by this amendment. I

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admit it's bipartisan support and maybe more Republican towns are in the regional districts than the other. I didn't really see how it fit real well within the formula, but I think it at least says that we do have the right to look and move and tinker with the formula. I'll support it. The amount of money isn't so tremendous when you're looking at a \$1.1 billion formula in four years as to fight this particular change, but frankly, I do find it somewhat puzzling.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Will you remark further on Senate "C"? Will you remark further on Senate "C"? If not, all those in favor of adoption please indicate by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Those opposed indicate by saying no.

REPRESENTATIVES:

No.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The ayes have it. Senate "C" is adopted.

Will you remark further on the bill? Will you remark further on the bill? Representative Ward.

REP. WARD: (86th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As Representative Cohen

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said, the bill does culminate well over a year's work for a lot of people and it was a tough bill to put together. It's very difficult when you try and shape what will be the funding formula well into the -- perhaps this will be the formula into the 21st century, quite frankly, if we follow the pattern of the GTB where there's at least 10 years of following that formula. We're getting very close to moving into the next century with this. It will tell us how we'll spend our state education money, maybe 20% to 25% of the state budget over that 10 to 12 year period.

I think because it is that important that it's necessary for each member to carefully analyze the bill and determine whether it is the best formula we can bring forward today. The experience with GTB was we amended it and we changed it a little as each year went by. I'm sure that will be no different with this formula, but we must attempt, as best we can, to have the best formula here tonight. With that in mind, I would like to call an amendment and really to address one issue raised by the Chairman who indicated in her opening statement that all state aid had to be spent for school purposes.

Frankly, I don't read the file copy that way. I read a minimum expenditure requirement, but I don't

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read it as a requirement that funds cannot be used for tax relief. In fact, prior to calling an amendment, if I just might ask, through you, to the distinguished Chairman of Education, who I might while I'm speaking say who I've enjoyed working with over the past year and accommodating with me and it's a difficult bill to debate when you've worked well with someone in the past, but I think we do have some differences on it, if I might just ask, through you, if I'm correct, that under this current formula with the copy some of the funds the community receives can be used for tax relief.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Cohen, do you care to respond, Madam?

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Yes, thank you. Through you, Mr. Speaker, when I made that comment, Representative Ward, I was referring to the language in Section 3, Sub (c) which begins in line 340.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Ward.

REP. WARD: (86th)

I appreciate the clarification of the earlier remarks, Mr. Speaker, but let me just rephrase my

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question. Perhaps I was too long-winded. Is it correct that some money received by some communities could be used for tax relief, through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Cohen.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I assume that absent of fiscal autonomy for school boards, one could conclude that Representative Ward.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Ward.

REP. WARD: (86th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In fact, I think rather than giving fiscal autonomy to school boards, there's another way to be certain that money given out under this formula is not used for other than education purposes. Mr. Speaker, I'd ask if the Clerk would please call LCO No. 4822 and that I be permitted to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The Clerk is in possession of LCO No. 4822, designated House Amendment Schedule "A". Will the Clerk please call.

CLERK:

abs

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LCO 4822, designated House Amendment Schedule "A"
offered by Representative Ward, et al.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The gentleman has requested permission to summarize. Is there objection? Hearing none, Sir, please proceed.

REP. WARD: (86th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker and Ladies and Gentlemen of the Chamber, what this amendment does is provides that no town's equalization aid, that is their aid under this bill, can increase by more than the increase in the town's education budget. A brief summarization of that is if you get additional aid, you have to increase your local budget by that much. You can't supplant local money and use it for tax relief and I move adoption of the amendment, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The question is on adoption. Will you remark, Sir?

REP. WARD: (86th)

Yes, Mr. Speaker. This bill will have the state spending well over \$1 billion on general aid to education four years from now. That's a very substantial sum of money, a very substantial increase to ask the taxpayers to pay. I don't think it's unreasonable. I think I may get some grief in my

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district on that. I suspect some of my constituents may think it's a bit much. I think it's a reasonable commitment to education. I do, however, think that it's important that when we adoption education aid formulas that they be just that, that the formulas not be formulas that can be used as general revenue sharing, formulas that can be used to fill potholes, formulas that can be used to pay other municipal officials. That ought to be done with other municipal revenue, not with education dollars.

This amendment is a very, very simple amendment. It simply says if you get extra money, you need to spend that money on education. Why is it necessary? An editorial in the New Haven Register on Sunday indicated very clearly, for anybody that saw that, that one of the cities in my area, the City of New Haven did with GTB money. The first three years into the formula they subtracted \$6 million of local money for education, just subtracted it, pulled it right out of their budget. In fact, their local budget on education has only increased 10% of local money over the last ten years, 1% a year. That's because all of that GTB money could be used for tax relief, or large portions of it I should say, could be used for tax relief.

I, frankly, think it's wrong to go to the taxpayers

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with an education bill that is not education. I just think that's wrong. If you want a revenue sharing bill, we ought to change the title and have revenue sharing. If you want an education bill, and frankly, I'm dumfounded as to why the teachers' unions don't come out and endorse this sort of an amendment because it's insuring that it's in those schools that they talk to us so much about. Please adopt this amendment. Vote to spend these tax dollars for your children, for our children.

Mr. Speaker, I feel this amendment is important enough. I would ask that when we vote on it it be by roll call vote.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The gentleman has requested a roll call vote. Pursuant to House Rule 39 the Chair will try your minds. All those in favor of a roll call please indicate by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The requisite 20% has been satisfied. When the vote is taken it will be taken by roll. Just barely. Will you remark further on House Amendment Schedule "A"?

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REP. COHEN: (15th)

Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Cohen.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure it comes to no surprise to the other side that I am rising to oppose this amendment. I do agree with Representative Ward that it is a simple amendment, but I think it makes a couple of points which cause me to disagree. The first is that everything is tied to what you spent in your budget. We have no uniform budgeting in Connecticut. Some people's education budgets may include grants, federal funds that other towns do not and that will, in no way, promote the equity that the formula attempts to address.

And secondly, I think what the amendment says is that if you, as a school district, make a major expenditure. For instance, you have total curriculum revision or you have an expenditure to outfit computer labs through your entire school system and your spending is very, very high one year, that next year whether you need to spend at that level or not, according to this amendment, you must do that or you will lose your funding.

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For those reasons, I oppose the amendment, Sir.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Will you remark further on House Amendment Schedule "A"? Representative Ward.

REP. WARD: (86th)

Mr. Speaker, I don't read the amendment to say that at all. It simply says you must increase your budget starting in the base year by the additional aid that's given. If three or four years down the road you have a big, sudden local expenditure beyond the normal, it doesn't say that you always have to increase that budget. It takes your base year budget as you increase it and it just has to increase by the amount of the increased state aid. I think it's a reasonable amendment for an education bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Will you remark further on House Amendment Schedule "A"? Representative Mae Schmidle.

REP. SCHMIDLE: (106th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of this amendment. As one who has been involved in education for a long, long time and I was involved in the late 1970's in the GTB formula that we had and the creation of that, we all realize that by not specifically earmarking this money and not clearly saying that this

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money must and shall go for education, we really missed the board and the money went everywhere else, as we know, for municipal overburden, to take the snow off the streets and all that kind of thing.

I think this General Assembly has to stand up and be the voice that speaks for the children of this state, not just for administrators, not just for school buildings, not just for construction, not just for teachers, but most especially to speak for the students and if we are going to be the ones that speak for the students, then I, for one, would like to see the money that I vote for go directly for the students and be used by the students.

It's going to be a long, long time before we have an opportunity to redo this formula and to rethink it and I think this is our chance to make some meaningful change and I urge the adoption of this amendment, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Will you remark further on House Amendment Schedule "A"? Will you remark further on House Amendment Schedule "A"? If not, all those in favor of adoption please indicate --. Thank you for the reminder. I'm sure it probably would have escaped my attention otherwise. My apologies. Will you remark further on

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House Amendment Schedule "A"? If not, will staff and guests please come to the well of the House. Members please be seated. The machine will be opened.

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll call. Will all members return to the Chamber please. The House is voting by roll. Members to the Chamber please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Please check the roll call machine to ensure that your vote is properly recorded. If all members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

The Clerk please announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Amendment Schedule "A" to Senate Bill 539.

Total number voting	148
Necessary for Adoption	75
Those voting yea	60
Those voting nay	88
Those absent and not voting	3

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The amendment fails.

* * * * *

House Amendment Schedule "A".

After subsection (b) of section 2 insert the following:

"(c) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (a) and (b) of this section, no town's equalization aid entitlement shall be more than the sum of the difference between the education budget for the town for the fiscal year in which the grant is to be paid and the education budget for the town for the prior fiscal year and (1) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1990, base aid and (2) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1991, and for each fiscal year thereafter, the town's equalization aid entitlement for the prior fiscal year."

Delete section 4 and insert the following in lieu thereof:

"Sec. 4. (NEW) (a) For the fiscal years ending June 30, 1990, June 30, 1991, and June 30, 1992, the regular program expenditures of a town shall be not less than the greater of (1) the product of (A) the target foundation multiplied by the number of total need students of the town for the prior school year and (B) the ratio of the town's grant entitlement for such year pursuant to section 2 of this act divided by the town's target grant or (2) an amount equal to the sum of (A) the regular program expenditures for the town for the prior fiscal year and (B) the amount of the aid increase paid to the town as calculated pursuant to subsection (b) of this section.

(b) For the purposes of subsection (a) of this section, the amount of the aid increase paid to a town shall be (1) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1990, the amount of aid to be paid to the town for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1990, pursuant to section 3 of this act, less the base aid for the town, (2) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1991, the amount of aid paid to the town for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1991, pursuant to said section 3, less the amount of aid paid to the town for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1990, pursuant to said section 3 and (3) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1992, the amount of aid paid to the town for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1992, pursuant to said section 3, less the amount of aid paid to the town for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1991, pursuant to said section 3.

(c) For the year ending June 30, 1993, and for each fiscal year thereafter, the regular program

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expenditures of a town shall be not less than the foundation for such year multiplied by the total need students of the town for the prior school year.

(d) Upon a determination by the state board of education that a town failed in any fiscal year to meet its minimum expenditure requirement pursuant to subsection (a) or (c), as appropriate, of this section, the town shall forfeit an amount equal to two times the difference between said minimum expenditure requirement and the town's actual regular program expenditures. The amount so forfeited shall be withheld by the state department of education from the grant payable to the town in the second fiscal year immediately following such failure by deducting such amount from the town's equalization aid grant payment pursuant to section 3 of this act. Notwithstanding the provisions of this subsection, the state board of education may waive such forfeiture upon agreement with the town that the town shall exceed its minimum expenditure requirement during the fiscal year in which the forfeiture would occur by an amount not less than the amount of said forfeiture."

* * * * *

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Will you remark further on the bill?

Representative Bob Ward.

REP. WARD: (86th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned a little earlier, while I support the basic file copy that it is here, I think that some other changes can be made in it to make it a fairer formula, fairer to all the communities of our state. I think in any formula that you devise there are going arguments as to which community is being treated fairly, is everybody properly reflected.

Frankly, as I look at this bill before us, and it

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troubled me in the Equity Committee and it troubled a lot of other people there, there are an awful lot of hold harmless towns. That makes you wonder if there might not be a mistake somewhere within the formula. It's very difficult to address just that problem. There are also a lot of middle-sized cities that really didn't seem to be getting quite the aid that we intended to direct to them. As a result of that, I've attempted to draft an amendment that does move some money to those cities, the smaller cities that do need it and some of the poorer suburban communities.

I would ask the Clerk to please call LCO 792 and I request permission to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The Clerk is in possession of an amendment, LCO No. 792, designated House Amendment Schedule "B". Will the Clerk please call.

CLERK:

LCO 792, designated House Amendment Schedule "B"
offered by Representative Ward, et al.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The gentleman has requested permission to summarize. Is there objection? Hearing none, Sir, please proceed.

REP. WARD: (86th)

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Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what this amendment does, it makes a number of changes within the file copy, changes within the formula. It follows the same basic concept of the formula, but it makes the following changes. It says that payment in lieu of taxes grants will be considered part of the equalized net grand list. It says that need students will become .33 times the higher of the AFDC or the Mastery count in any community. It limits an aid ratio in any community to 75%. It provides an 8% hold harmless to towns who have a concentration of AFDC or Mastery students greater than 20% and it increases the guaranteed wealth level and I move adoption of the amendment, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The question is on adoption of House Amendment Schedule "B". Will you remark?

REP. WARD: (86th)

Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Ward.

REP. WARD: (86th)

Thank you. I tried briefly to summarize it as a summary of the bill, but I think I'd like to step back and explain the amendment a little more because if

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you're not familiar with the entire concept of how the foundation grant works, I suspect that summarization was rather confusing.

The formula used is one factor of the equalized net grant list in a community, that is, the value of your property for tax purposes, your ability to pay taxes through property. It does not measure payments in lieu of taxes received by communities. Those payment in lieu of taxes when provided by the state are really state dollars given to the community in lieu of the state paying taxes on them. So it is logical to include those within the definition of an equalized net grant list. This amendment does that.

It also changes the count for a need student. A need student under the file copy is a fictional creation originally created under the GTB and followed through here. It says we recognize in some communities some kids are tougher to educate than others and says we ought to give more money to educate those children. The long time proxy, the figure used to estimate those need children was AFDC. This year the Equity Committee said we should also use the Mastery Count and that we assign a value. You count a kid that's on AFDC or from a family on AFDC as an extra one-fourth which gives more aid to that community or they fail the Mastery, an

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extra one-fourth.

The purpose of that was not to double count students, but rather to say wherever there's a need child, be sure you have an appropriate proxy to measure them because we found AFDC alone didn't work, but when you use one-fourth, one-fourth, you've double rewarded some kids and not rewarded other enough. This says you take the highest count and use one-third for the extra aid to those communities.

Frankly, what that will do is move to many eastern Connecticut towns additional revenue. Thirdly, it says that no town's aid ratio should exceed 75%. That number was taken, really, it's kind of splitting the difference between several of our other grant formulas that say the maximum state contribution is 70% or 80%, be it a Transportation Fund, Special Ed Fund. The concept in those funds, if there's not some local contribution that's significant, there's no incentive to use the money wisely. I'm suggesting to this Chamber that 75% is a reasonable ration for state to pay in any community.

Finally, what the amendment does is say, and I'll tell you, it's taken from the Senate Amendment, it said there were towns that complained that they weren't being treated fairly and it was an attempt to look

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within the formula to find a way to change that. Two towns in particular that were very noisy about being treated unfairly were Stamford and Norwalk and when you actually look at the numbers, they are the only two towns in the state that have such a heavy concentration, 20% concentration and yet were hold harmless towns of need students, 20%.

This amendment says they ought to get at least an 8% hold harmless to recognize their needs.

Finally, the amendment alters the guaranteed wealth level to redistribute the money that is saved through the 75% cap or through the alteration of the .33. The fiscal note tells that us that 103 towns will receive additional grants under this formula and you might suspect, you say a Republican's bringing the amendment, what have you done, shifted a lot of money to the wealthiest Republican communities, no, not a penny, not a penny to the wealthiest communities.

I didn't look for a formula that said that traditional hold harmless towns ought to get a lot more money, but I said there are some towns out there that have need and the formula didn't address it. Danbury is one of those towns that talked a lot. They needed a third tier. Well, it's not a third tier, but this puts more money in Danbury. It answers their concerns.

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East Haven is a community that struggled with a local budget, a lot of local yelling that they're not able to meet their needs for education. This amendment shifts substantial funds, over half a million dollars in the fourth year, to the Town of East Haven. The lower Naugatuck Valley, an area I grew up in and I'm familiar with, hardly a rich area of the state. Ansonia, Derby, Seymour, all receive significant increases in state aid under this formula. Is that wasteful money? Not unless that community has changed an awful lot since I moved from there and I still have family there, so I've seen some of that community. I think they have educational problems. I think we ought to be addressing those under this formula.

Bristol receives significantly more money under this formula. East Hartford, frankly, a town that when you look at the formula, almost everybody that looks at it says, "Why didn't they do better?" A difficult question to answer. Rather than answer why they didn't do better under the formula that was there, I think it's better to alter the formula so they do do better. East Hartford is no longer a hold harmless town, but in fact would receive up to \$860,000 additional revenue in the fourth year out.

I won't go through all of the towns on my list at

this moment. The Town of Granby, not one of the wealthiest of the state, receives very substantial increases under this amendment. Manchester, Meriden, again, not one of the wealthiest communities in the state, will do better with this amendment. Naugatuck will do much better with this amendment. Norwalk, as I already mentioned, does much better under this amendment as does Stamford, Southington, South Windsor, Wallingford, Thomaston, Thompson, Tolland, 101 towns, and one can say, "Well, you shouldn't just have an amendment that gives more money to other towns. The amendment ought to be based on some sense of fairness." I tell you, I bring this amendment with no embarrassment whatsoever. I don't say to you that this is an amendment that just shifts money needlessly or politically. I think it's reasonable to say 75% is the maximum aid ration, especially when you rejected the amendment that says use it for education.

I think it's wrong to have an education bill that will allow money to be shifted to other uses. Seventy-five percent is another way of being sure the money is used for education. If it can't be used for education, shift it to a community that uses it.

Mr. Speaker, I feel so strongly about this amendment as well that I would ask that when the vote

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is taken on this amendment it be taken by roll call.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

You certainly do have strong feelings, Sir.

Pursuant to House Rule 39 the Chair will try your minds. The gentleman has requested a roll call vote. Will all those in favor of a roll call vote please indicate by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The requisite 20% this time has been clearly satisfied. When the vote is taken it will be taken by roll. Will you remark further on House "B"? Will you remark further on House "B"?

REP. VAN NORSTRAND: (141st)

Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Van Norstrand.

REP. VAN NORSTRAND: (141st)

Mr. Speaker, I hope, and I don't know, I suppose I can ask Representative Ward, have people on the other side of the aisle been given, through you, Mr. Speaker, have people on the other side of the aisle been given a run on what this amendment produces?

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

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Representative Ward, do you care to respond, Sir?

REP. WARD: (86th)

A copy of the run is attached to the fiscal note, Mr. Speaker. I don't know how many of the other members have that. It was distributed to a number of members a couple of hours ago.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Van Norstrand, you have the floor.

REP. VAN NORSTRAND: (141st)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know we've got a lot of empty chairs over there and we've got empty chairs over here. I'm not picking on you. You know, we have done educational funding on the Chinese menu basis for so long. Column A, Column B, did my town win or lose? And this amendment, I support it, I support it. It's reasonable. I'll tell you, I've got runs on other amendments that I could run that would point out what is wrong with what we're doing. This amendment says, "Hey, yea, you in the town, the town you live in, yea, you pay 25%." That's unreasonable? This was declared, what, 14 years ago, 13 years ago now to be a state obligation.

This amendment, it's not a -- Mr. Speaker, I don't think I'm reaching him and I feel bad about that. That's life. This isn't about what column gives you

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more aid. This about us being a state. Yea, there are places that are supposed to be richer and poorer and we've been stuck with a formula for God knows how many years that says, and we've all heard the phrase, what is it, the Gold Coast, I think, Gold Coast, yea, and you know what, Miss Goodwin in 1959, I don't think people in the Bridgeport delegation even realize it, she told the Bridgeport delegation in 1959, you're rich. You don't win. Hartford wins. And I don't want to do that either. We don't have a formula that measure wealth. This is a reasonable proposal that says, "Wait a minute. How many phantom students do we have to do."

You know, I was talking to my colleague, Representative Nystrom, about the one-quarter, one-quarter AFDC or Mastery. You see, in Hartford they're the same. In Norwich they're not. There may be Mastery problems, but they don't go on welfare. For whatever reason, I'll leave that to you to decide and it may have something to do with work ethic, it may have to do with something else. I don't really care. In Hartford they're the same phantoms twice. This amendment addresses that.

You know, in the debate last night on the other bill I said the same thing. You know, my town, I have

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a run, I can do a formula. I will do a formula that would give Norwalk \$14 million and Stamford \$21 million on income alone. You want to talk wealth, that's the measure of ability to pay, income. No, we have these phantom students. We have these phantom allocations. That's what it would produce. I'm not going to do it. I never approached 12 years of service, Mr. Speaker, being a wise guy. Do I think that run is legitimate? Do I think Darien, my town, has four times the per capita income of Hartford? Yes, I do. Will I get four times the aid? Yes. And as I said last night, when Hartford gets 125 times the aid, you'll wonder why people get off the ship, get a little upset. This is reasonable. I'm not offering that amendment. I'm not going to do it. Is it right? And if anyone in the Norwalk or Stamford delegation vote against it, they're nuts because they're getting ripped off and I still wouldn't do. I still wouldn't do it.

This is still one state, but to tip the balance so extremely, that's outrageous. We're dealing with -- I mean understand the ethic of this bill, the so-called intelligence of it. We have phantom students and when I told you \$21 million for Stamford, \$14 million for Norwalk, that's still giving the AFDC component. I'd never take it out. I've argued on the floor of this

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house I'd never take it out. I believe, I've said it before, I don't want to bore you. I've said it before, I believe when a hungry child comes to school there are special problems and I'll give that bonus. There is nothing in the literature, and I have read it extensively, that justifies it, quantitatively. I'll still do it. I still think if you come from an impoverished environment and you come to school hungry and you come from an environment that doesn't value and education, you're hurting. I'll still do it, but 125 to 1 when you people in my town have a four times the per capita income and I've got a formula that says 125 times. I'm amazed that people from Norwalk and Stamford don't get outraged. I really am. What's before you, and I know educational formulas historically have been done on local greed, Column A, Column B, the Chinese menu.

I've got to tell you, this amendment before you, and I have looked at, well, I'm not going to ask for my co-editor, the Minority Leader to tell me, I think it's something like 20 runs we've looked at. Yea, and some could be political. Some could not. I've got to tell you, what's before you is fair. Yea, yes, it minimizes phantom students. It does. Please remember, four times the per capita income and we've got a formula

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that will produce 125 times. I've got people in my town, my town, yea, suburban Darien will say, "Hartford deserves more. We have a higher per capita income" and I used to tell them, well it's four times and then it became ten times, twelve times, eighteen times. Now it's 114. Give me a break! Give every town and community in the state a break. And you know something in this amendment, it's not Republican towns, it's fairness. Yea, and it says one other thing. I don't care about all the aid and everything else, yea, 25% you raised locally. I'm sorry. There's no commitment. We have put money in, and as I said last night, we put money into Hartford's educational system and they spent it on something else because it wasn't for local school aid. It wasn't for local school taxing effort. I know the cliché is potholes. God knows where they spend it.

And when we were in the majority, in 1986 they were \$5 million short, they weren't entitled to get and we still did it. We still did it and you know why? I see Representative Fonfara, I'll tell you why, because we're one state and I don't believe there's anybody in this Chamber that does not recognize the relative poverty of Hartford and New Haven, but 125 to 1. As I said earlier, give me a break. I mean we're one state. We care. We care about our capital city and I don't

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mean to pick on you, Representative Fonfara, because you weren't part of all the history that occurred. There were times when there were more games played in Hartford. That's not the issue tonight. I'm telling you, please look at the run on this amendment. This is a fair amendment. Yes, yes, if you're from the Hartford delegation or the Bridgeport delegation, does this tell you, "Oh, my God, I didn't get quite as much," I agree, "than I could have." Yea, yea, it means that.

Representative Gabe, it does. It means that, but wait a minute. Oh, are you going to vote against it. Parochially, I understand that. It's not important, but I will go back to you, Representative Biafore, do you want to be part of one state? Do you want walls built up? Do want walls to come down? That's what this is about. Walls can come down. This is fair. The irony is Bridgeport loses more than Hartford because they don't have as many phantom students because there's more people in Bridgeport that want to go to work. Give it a chance. Give it a chance. This is a fair amendment. It really is and if you don't like this amendment, if you really are off on the merits that the local community isn't supposed to pay 25% of educating their own flesh and blood. They're

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not willing to make that commitment. Give us a break!

This is a fair amendment because if you don't like this, oh, I can show you worse amendments. They relate to relative wealth and I don't want to do that. I have no desire to do that. This is fair. This is a good amendment. Yes, and if you're from one of the -- well, there's probably 10, 12 municipalities that lose some, yes, and do three or four lose some, no, they haven't lost anything. They don't get as big a gain, but it will pay off on another day when somebody from Bridgeport or Hartford or Waterbury or some other major municipality, New Haven, stands up and says, "Hey, I want fairness." I say it to you now and I will say it to you then, well, I'm sorry, if it doesn't happen in this session I won't say it to you. The guy who replaces me will say it to you, but this is a fair amendment. This is a good solution. It avoids a lot of problems and it avoids building that wall. We don't need it. I don't care whether you're in Hartford, New Haven, Bridgeport, the last thing we need is walls around those communities and the people in communities outside that wall saying "we're getting ripped off." There's no reason to.

I stood on the floor of this House in 1986. I believe it was only the second measure in that year

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that I came to the floor to debate that dealt with Educational Enhancement. I fought that day for Bridgeport, for Hartford. This is a good amendment. This is a fair amendment. You could offer amendments that would skew it and, you know, oh, God knows, please, I hope you give me credit. My imagination could go everywhere in terms of formulas that would put money in Republican towns. That's not the thrust of this amendment. The thrust of this amendment is fairness. Mind you, even in Bridgeport, you're already prejudiced because your land values are good. You lose against Hartford.

This is a fair shake. I hope you support it. It makes a lot of sense. If all of you on that side of the aisle and all of the people on this side of the aisle want to be part of one state, I hope you will support it.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Will you remark further on House "B"?

Representative Lennie Winkler.

REP. WINKLER: (41st)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of this amendment. The funds do appear to be distributed more fairly across the state. My local taxpayers already pick up a shortfall of \$4 1/2 million to \$5 million

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from the inadequacy of the federal government's impact aid formula for the Navy in our community. I feel it is the responsibility of this House to vote what is best for the entire state and not just a few select communities. I urge all members to support this amendment. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Will you remark further on House Amendment Schedule "B"? Representative Naomi Cohen.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Mr. Speaker, again, I'm sure it comes as no surprise to the members that I rise in opposition to this amendment. I believe that we ought to go back to discuss what Representative Ward originally discussed and that's the components of the amendment. With respect to capping expenditures at 75%, I believe that the short answer is that reverse "Robin Hood" because what that cap does is take from the 16 poorest towns and also by raising the guaranteed wealth level distributed everywhere else. If we're one state, as Representative Van Norstrand suggested, and which I choose to believe, then I think we again have to remind ourselves that this was a formula that tried to take all those factors into account and that we don't want to take from the poorest communities.

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With respect to including the pilot grant in the formula, the members of the Chamber should know that the Office of Policy and Management is conducting an extensive, thorough survey with outside consultants to determine whether in fact pilot grants should be included. That survey will come to the Chamber within the next year. I hope it also goes to the Equity Committee and I believe then and only then is it time to include that.

I should tell you, Representative Van Norstrand, that I also have a run. My run is different than your run because at least the run I saw that you had didn't include need pupils, but I have a run that includes need pupils much like this one and I can get my town and four other towns a lot of money. I can get my town almost \$300,000 more, but I believe for the same reason that I'm not offering that run that we should not be voting to change the distribution of the formula to benefit individual communities and I urge rejection of the amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Will you remark further on House Amendment Schedule "B"? Representative Ward, for the third time, second time.

REP. WARD: (86th)

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I believe second on the amendment, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Please proceed, Sir.

REP. WARD: (86th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, reverse "Robin Hood." That was a nice little quote when they used that up in the Senate and it got some press. It sounds nice, but frankly, this amendment says over what New Haven and Hartford, if you use two of the bigger cities, got when we did Education Enhancement, what their base is, and Education Enhancement gave them a lot more money, \$22 million more, roughly, in each community. Reverse "Robin Hood", \$22 million more. That's what we're talking about.

We're not talking about a drastic cut in their aid. We're talking about substantial, substantial increases. Yea, I looked at a lot of other runs, some of which resulted in very little increases in some of those cities, and frankly, I didn't think that made sense, but I think the bill ought to make sense, too. The increases ought to have some semblance, some ration from one to another, 75% as an aid ratio is more than reasonable as a maximum.

Currently, if you look at the Hartford figures that I looked up, right now on all their spending, the state

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pays over 66%. We're talking about for regulation education increasing that up to 75%. Reverse "Robin Hood", stealing from the poor? I think it's a substantial increase for the poor and substantial increase for other communities that have equal problems and we talk about stealing from Hartford and giving to wealthy Derby. I'm lost as to where "Robin Hood" is. This didn't transfer, as Representative Van Norstrand said. We didn't take money from an inner city and give it to one of the wealthiest communities in the state. We gave it to a variety of communities, many with serious educational needs.

I hope the Chamber will support this amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Will you remark further on House Amendment Schedule "B"? Will you remark further on House "B"?

Representative Sally Bolster.

REP. BOLSTER: (137th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of the amendment. I come from Norwalk and I realize that because it's in Southwestern Fairfield County, a great many people feel that this is part of the Gold Coast, but it really isn't. It's a city of almost 80,000 people. It's got a little bit of everything. We've got a great many youngsters who are coming from single

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parent homes who are coming from AFDC homes, kids that need additional help and Norwalk has always worked very, very hard to try to meet the needs of these young people and certainly the formula, as it was originally proposed by the Education Committee, left us out someplace in left field just because property values have gone so sky high.

I might also add that the majority of the people who live in Norwalk can't afford to buy their own house. They've been there for awhile and that's the only way they get to stay there. So it is important to us. Stamford, Norwalk, Danbury, we're cities. We have all of the problems, maybe in somewhat smaller numbers, but the problems of the Bridgeports and the New Havens and the Hartfords and I think it's only fair that these cities are also taken into consideration.

Representative Ward's formula has been very carefully worked out. As you go through it, you find that it does seem as if those communities that probably need a little more help are getting a little more help and those that probably don't need it, for some reason aren't getting it. It's true that some of the wealthier towns that surround us in Southwestern Fairfield County really don't need an awful lot of state aid. They manage to do it on their own and

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that's great and wonderful and I'm glad for them, but I think that those of us who live in the cities, no matter which end of the state we come from, are entitled to equal treatment by this state and by this Capitol here in Hartford and I would urge my fellow members across the aisle to consider Mr. Ward's proposal very, very carefully because it's going to help more people than it hurts. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Nick Pavia.

REP. PAVIA: (145th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, rise in support of this amendment. During my campaign in the special election, when I would go door-to-door 90 degrees below zero, I'd come to houses with people who are very pro-education and people who weren't so much education and they would just say to me, "If you do get up there, just fight for better formulas." And I would like to address my words to Representative Cohen who said we shouldn't just take one certain community and give them a lot of money over the others. Exactly. I'm a little embarrassed by what the Senate did with Stamford. Yes, it's helping. Yes, we're getting under that amendment 5% more, but under this amendment we get 8% plus we help other communities like Danbury and others like

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that who weren't considered up in the Senate floor. This helps everybody and I urge you to support it. Forget that you're Democrats. Forget that you're Republicans. We're Connecticut people. We have to go back and explain ourselves and I'm very happy and proud to be a co-sponsor of this amendment. Thank you very much.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Will you remark further on House "B".

Representative Edward Krawiecki.

REP. KRAWIECKI: (78th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members of the House, I just want to tell you that we have come nowhere in ten years. In 1979 I was elected and serving in this Chamber for the first time and I remember serving on the Education Committee and naive as hell, saying "We're going to put together an education formula for all of the people of the State of Connecticut" and Lord knows I spent a heck of a lot of time going to a heck of a lot of meetings around this state trying to learn the difference between as many communities as we could so that we could come out with a plan that tried to address Horton Meskill.

We blew it! We blew it! For ten years we've been screwing around, tightening here, loosening there,

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pushing it back there, putting new numbers in here, trying to make a formula that doesn't work when it doesn't deal with solely education and solely children and this formula, Representative Cohen, is not much better. It isn't much better and until we stop deceiving ourselves and calling this and every other formula an education formula, we're not going to be doing the job that Horton Meskill set us out on. We're not doing it and that battery of folks down in the corner, this is a proprietary argument that we're entered into now. You know it and I know it. Ten years ago I learned that. For ten years I watched the process and I'm amazed. You know, we ought to be honest with one another when we go home and we spend an entire legislative session trying to figure out how we're going to put an education formula together and it isn't. It isn't an education formula. It does a whole lot of other things and I'll grant that maybe we ought to be doing every single thing that the formula includes and this amendment includes and you're going to hear a lot of high plateau conversations tonight about why we should stay with the file copy. You're going to hear a lot of high plateau conversations from all kinds of different people on all kinds of amendments, real high plateau conversations.

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But you want to know what it's going to come down to, and you might as well get it in your noggin on Day 1, look at every run and see how much money your town gets because whether you realize it or not, in the end some towns are getting more money than others and they're getting it for reasons that aren't being said on the floor of the House on an education bill. Ten years ago I admired tremendously Representative Goodwin for putting the program together that she put together. I was amazed and fabulously impressed and in ten years, I guess I'm a heck of a lot of less impressed by the process and how we try to deal with education.

We have failed. In ten years we've go nowhere in trying to deal with the problem. Yea, we're going to spend a lot of money and I'm one of those people from a community that can honestly say and, Representative Cohen, you and I probably can agree on this one thing for sure, every single formula you have tried, I bet you Bristol comes out better. Almost every single one and all the runs I've seen that this side of the aisle has come up with, we come out even better and that's probably because we're smack dab in the middle someplace and we got a little bit of all kinds of funny problems. We have some wealth. We've got some poor people. We got some kids that fails tests. We got

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some that pass tests. We've got people that are on AFDC. We've got people that are on welfare. We have a little bit of everything and I guess maybe that's how I'm going to look at this, but in the end, please pay attention to the runs because in the end you're going to be making decisions and notwithstanding the high plateau arguments you're going to hear, you're going to make decisions on what's best for your community and how best you can get some money into your community to use it for education.

I think it is unfortunate that the earlier amendment wasn't adopted, but this amendment makes more sense to me and I guess it makes more sense because I happen to think there ought to be a minimum threshold for municipalities to spend some money on education and if there isn't let's become 100% state funded and the heck with local autonomy on education. If that's what we want, then let's move there. Let's not fool around with some local and some state. Forget it.

And you know, we ought to take a look at all the other monies that come into the fund and into the communities from all different angles and I guess that's why the pilot provision is included in this formula and take a look at AFDC numbers, and I agree, Norwalk has a problem, Stamford has a problem.

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Otherwise the good Senator wouldn't have included an amendment. Why in the world do you think he included it? Not because it made a formula any better, because it helped one community, that's why. Don't be naive. It took me ten years to learn that here. Don't be naive.

Yea, we're going to get a lot more money moving into education and this is a formula that we're putting on a rubber stamp on as we move into the 21st century. I would venture to guess that we'll make changes in the future and I would venture to guess that we're going to push back dates and I'll venture to guess we'll slide off numbers and it'll be based on how the economy is rolling along. Don't be naive. That's all I'm asking you to do. Now I'm asking you to take a look at the amendment that's before you, look at the run that's before you. This'll be the only time I speak tonight. I just want you to know that we went through this ten years ago, run by run by run and in ten years we have gone through run after run after run after run. How do we make education work better? We push it out. We slide it along. We fund it more. We spread it out. We do all kinds of funny things, but we're still trying to grope with Horton Meskill and I think we've gone this far, zero, folks, but don't let all the

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conversation you hear tonight have anybody impress you any greater and especially the battery of folks down in the corner over there. Don't have them make you believe that we are doing anything grandiose here. This is a propriety plan that's before you in the file. I think the amendment that Representative Ward is offering you is a little better only because of the little mechanisms that are being tinkered with and with all due deference to the Chairman of the Committee, I think you've done a pretty good job trying to juggle all the things that go on there. I've done it at least once and I did it ten years ago and I was fabulously amazed at the process.

It's not an easy job. It's not an easy job and I mean no disrespect whatsoever in my comments. I just don't like to hear the conversation about how much we're really doing for education and those of you that served on the committee know exactly what I'm talking about and those of you that never have, you ought to sit in on that committee sometime and you'll learn pretty quickly.

I think this is a good amendment. I think a lot of the amendments you'll hear tonight are good. Some are better for some communities. Some are better for other communities. This one happens to be good for 101

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communities better than the file copy, in my own opinion, and that's just based on the bottom line. That's all.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Will you remark further on House "B"? The Chair would observe that debate on this amendment has run on at considerable length. While we recognize that members feel strongly about it, the Chair would urge members to curtail their remarks to the briefest extent possible. Representative Van Norstrand.

REP. VAN NORSTRAND: (141st)

In all fairness, Mr. Speaker, on your way to \$1 billion plus, I suspect it's worthy of debate. Representative Cohen, through you, Mr. Speaker, a question. Just as a humble servant from my district, which is the Town of Darien and a piece of Stamford, how do I justify to my constituents that under this magical formula the City of Hartford would get 125 times more aid per pupil than either Stamford or Darien?

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Cohen.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Through you, Mr. Speaker, if I were you Representative Van Norstrand, I would tell my

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constituents that the formula tried to address disparity by looking at per need students by equalizing the per pupil tax resources standing behind them, by equalizing school tax rates and by tying the state's share of funding to that which districts are required to spend.

REP. VAN NORSTRAND: (141st)

Through you, Mr. Speaker, could I have my question answered?

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Van Norstrand.

REP. VAN NORSTRAND: (141st)

Could I have my question answered, through you, Sir?

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Cohen.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Through you, Sir, that's the best I can do.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Van Norstrand.

REP. VAN NORSTRAND: (141st)

Through you, Sir, I'm sorry, all these -- I'm sorry, I've lost my perspective. I guess it's out there, the skyline of Hartford, that's poor, through you?

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DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Cohen.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Through you, Sir, as I understand it the United States Census Bureau of Data ranks Hartford fourth poorest city in the United States.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Van Norstrand.

REP. VAN NORSTRAND: (141st)

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that comment. On the other hand, the City of Hartford only has something like 18% residential property owners. The commercial property owners are not poor. They are indeed among the most affluent corporate entities in the world and they get taxed by the City of Hartford. I will presume that Representative Cohen has given me her best answer in terms of how do I justify 125 times more aid when the per capita income difference in my community and almost the same in Stamford, four times. Through you, Mr. Speaker, of Representative Cohen, is it in your vision, "Alice in Wonderland" vision, that we are ever going to measure wealth in a formula or do you envision us staying stuck with the sales assessment ratio forever?

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

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Representative Cohen.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Through you, Sir, I envision, Representative Van Norstrand, that this formula, like all formulas will undergo continual revisions.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Van Norstrand.

REP. VAN NORSTRAND: (141st)

One last, because I can see the way it's going, Mr. Speaker, through you, we are at least in the short term, dedicated to not measuring wealth in terms of property wealth. Are we in agreement?

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Cohen.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Through you, Sir, I believe that we are measuring wealth through the wealth factors in the formula and I don't know whether we can ever agree as to whether those formulas are good measures.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Van Norstrand.

REP. VAN NORSTRAND: (141st)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Representative Cohen. You see, that's the problem. Per capita income, four times, Yea, I come from a suburban town

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and I represent part of a major city in this state and I believe the cumulative average will be something like four times the per capita income in Hartford and I'm supposed to vote for a formula that says 125 times for Hartford. I'm stuck with a formula based on the sales and assessment ratio. I don't know how you guys live your lives and I don't know how you ladies live your lives, my understanding about wealth is what you own. We've got a formula that measures gross and do I agree? I think it was Representative Mizakoski who used to call it the Gold Coast or whatever, yea, prices are high. If you live near New York, you've got to compete to find a place for your family to live.

Yea, that's the gross price. Do you want to know what kind of mortgage you've got to get to try to stay in the game and for what, an investment, a capital gain, a killing, no, for a place for your kids to live and to go to school within some relative range where you can work. We don't have a formula that measures wealth. We never have. That was never Miss Goodwin's intention. She wanted to measure gross. That's the problem. Wealth is the difference between the mortgage and the house price, that's what you own. That's all you own. We don't have a formula that does that and that's on top of, on top of, I'm already conceding and

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I have never stood on this floor and said I'd cut out the AFDC component.

There is nothing in educational liturgy, by the way, to support that educational AFDC component as a surrogate, but I'll do it. I'll still do it. I'll take it on faith. I'll do the Mastery on faith. Yea, I know. There's a problem. Pay towns more to do worse. I've got a problem with that, but I'll done one-quarter on that, but look at me. Am I going to get a lot of green votes over there. I understand that part, but wait a minute, four times per capita income. I'll give Hartford four times the aid. You want to measure wealth and you're telling me I'm going to modify the Travelers Towers, which this bill does, by the 18% residential.

In other words, I'm supposed to sit here and take it that four times isn't enough, 125 times and the Travelers Tower is poor. The Aetna is poor because it is modified by a small residential component. That's outrageous. That's how we get and that's how -- it's not even important the numbers. Representative Cohen, probably as she sees the world, I suppose, answered as best she could, probably in the heritage of Dorothy Goodwin. That's what divides a state. That's what pits regions against other regions. It's wrong. This

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amendment, it really doesn't cut into much of that at all, but God knows it's fairer because you continue to breed a problem, a division. I totally respect, Mr. Speaker, the Democrats of good will in their communities who are willing to continue to get ripped off.

It's not Fairfield County. This amendment is not addressed to Fairfield County. Representative Ward has already told you the statistics on what this amendment does. There is never formula, any amendment that'll be offered here tonight where my community gets a dime. I accept that, but I would think if I was from Watertown and West Haven, God knows Stamford and Norwalk. I get the feeling I've been ripped off and with good reason, with good reason. Now the people of Stamford, you know, I remember the late Tony Truglia, I don't believe there's anybody on the other side of the aisle who'll say he wasn't a good Democrat. He never once, as I recall, 13 -- 12 or 13 years in this Chamber, voted for any GTB formula that Miss Goodwin ever conceived because Stamford always got ripped off and they did and Norwalk's awakening is a little later. I understand that.

This formula is fair. That amendment embodied in House "B" is fair. It has a chance of bringing a state

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together. You can't live on gross on a formula that has nothing to do with wealth and if any of you sitting over there, maybe sitting over here, I don't know, if you own a house and if you think, "gee, tomorrow I could get "x" for my house and that's the measure of my wealth," I hope just for a moment, a fleeting moment, you'll address yourself to, "well, gee, I do have to pay off the existing mortgage because between the two, that's what you own. That's wealth. This formula doesn't do it. It isn't related to income. This formula gives my town nothing.

Under this formula, more importantly, I'm sorry, under the file copy, Hartford gets 125 times the aid and they have four times per capita income. Am I missing something or are you guys suckers?

DEPUTY SPEAKER LAVINE:

Will you remark further on this bill?

Representative Nania.

REP. NANIA: (63rd)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This debate has been far different than what I expected and before I say anything, I think I should give you my bona-fide. I don't think there's anyone in here that prizes education more than I or books or reading. I've spent an entire year of my life in the basement of Widener

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Library after college, not working, just reading, and when different people bring to me formulas, Representative Schlesinger, Representative Ward, Representative Cohen's formulas, I hardly ever respond. My own towns do as well under most of them as anyone else, but inside I'm not taking you very seriously at all.

Horton Meskill, if it mean anything, mean two things. One, that the state, in fact, was responsible for education and, two, that the state was responsible to equalize the differences in opportunity between towns and ever since then we've come up with one formula after another to pay, to pay for education. We will never. I hate to say this because you are helpless, Representative Cohen, you are not able, nor are we, to really do anything about education in Hartford because prior --.

DEPUTY SPEAKER LAVINE:

Representative Nania.

REP. NANIA: (63rd)

Yes, Sir.

DEPUTY SPEAKER LAVINE:

The comments might be more appropriate on the bill itself. We have an amendment before us. We've had an amendment before us for quite some time. I think it

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would be helpful if we directed our attention to the amendment and then if you want to make those general comments, it may be more appropriate to the bill.

REP. NANIA: (63rd)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, my comments are in fact appropriate to the amendment because the amendment is another one of a series of formulas which I believe in the end finally are fruitless and, if you will, I would like to finish.

DEPUTY SPEAKER LAVINE:

I would certainly not stop you, Sir. I just that you direct your comments to the amendment. Thank you.

REP. NANIA: (63rd)

Thank you, Sir. As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, the problem here, as I see it, is we have a mistaken belief that we are able, not just through the expenditure of a little money, but now through the expenditure of an extraordinary sum of money to somehow equalize the difference between one community and another community in this state. Earlier we debated a bill on residency and I think Representative Dyson made a point that should never, never, never be forgotten, that there's a certain foundation that must be present in a community, the middle class streets that are safe, jobs that are available, there's a context in which education can

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happen. It can't be paid for from the top. It has to be made possible from the bottom.

I'm not really sure, Mr. Speaker, it makes any difference what I say. I think I'll stop here.

DEPUTY SPEAKER LAVINE:

Will you remark further on the bill?

Representative Jaekle.

REP. JAEKLE: (122nd)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm rising in support of the amendment. You have to understand how frustrating this can be. We have an education formula in front of us that's going to substantially increase state spending and the amendment that I'm rising in favor of I happen to think makes sense, certainly philosophically to the formula and the file copy and what this does and the real frustrating thing is I look out, it's not a full Chamber, I know it's late at night, the frustration is I guess I'd really like to feel if I could fully explain it even just to tell you what the dollars are for your communities, how could I not get more votes than I know I'm going to get. That's the frustration and it really is because we have a formula that measures the wealth of a community. It looks at Grand List. It modifies it by income. You know what, when you're measuring the wealth of a

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community in the file copy you don't even take into account how much money the state sends to the municipality in lieu of property taxes.

So you measure basically the property taxes of a town in an indirect fashion and Equalized Net Grant List. I'm sure everybody understands that. It's adjusted as well. I forgot one of the initials, Adjusted Equalized Net Grand List, to measure property tax wealth basically of a community, but you don't measure the state payments for property taxes. It doesn't make sense. The amendment says you measure that.

How can that not make sense? But I gather are the orders are you vote against something like that. Then we're going to send out money based on need pupils. When I started here we had a formula that was easy to understand. We sent out \$250 per every student that was in the classroom. It was called the ADM Grant, Average Daily Membership. It wasn't until I came up here that I figured out why we had truant officers when I was going to school. It wasn't to keep me in class. It was to keep me as part of the count so my town would get the grant, but you know that formula was easy to understand. That's what towns got. It was based on per pupil. You got \$250 per kid. We've moved away

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from that. Now we're paying not just per student, but per need student. So if you're a student, you count as one. If you're a student who's on Aid to Family with Dependent Children, you're counted as one and a quarter people and if you're a student that fails the Mastery Test, you're counted as one and a quarter students, and you know what, if you're the student that's on AFDC and fails the Mastery, magic, you're counted as one and a half people.

So we're not only counting somebody as more than one person, but this added need component which measure AFDC or Mastery can double count the same child. The amendment says, Wait a minute. Take the higher figure, higher number of AFDC or if Mastery Failure is higher and rather than multiplying by a quarter, multiply by a third. Can't that make some sense? That's what the amendment does.

And by all means, shouldn't every municipality in this state be expected to pay 25% of their local school budget, one-quarter? Is that too much to ask? You know the file copy is going to send more than that to many school districts. The amendment says, wait a minute. No town will get more than 75% of its school budget paid for by the State of Connecticut, but the orders are don't vote for that even if that makes

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sense. Debate against it. Say why that doesn't make sense. It'd be an interesting debate and, yea, the amendment says -- we're getting weird in the formulas today. The file copy creates a formula and 59 towns don't even, well, they don't even get the amount of aid that they get today. No, that's not quite right, but 59 towns are called hold harmless. The formula says they're going to get an amount of money, we said, "Wait a minute, that's not enough for certain towns. We've got to increase some towns by 1% more or 5% more" or else you could be in the State Senate and you can say, "Stamford, you can get 5% more even though you're only entitled to 1% more. Everybody understand the file copy?"

Well, I'll have to confess I don't, but I think the amendment makes four changes that do make sense to the file copy. That one by one I think are argued make sense. Well, I don't think that I can get through to anybody, but I don't want anybody to vote against this not knowing what it means to their districts. Maybe you can't GTB and EEA, that was the Educational Enhancement Act and this is probably going to be called the ECS, maybe you can't explain it, but how are you going to explain it, let's say you live in Norwalk, how are you going to vote against an amendment to a bill

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that says, wait a minute, Norwalk has the same sort of needs as Stamford, but I'll support giving Stamford more money by an amendment process to the file, but not Norwalk.

Well, this says Norwalk and Stamford. You have the same type need based on AFDC students should each get more money than the file copy says. All right, Norwalk, are you going to vote no? It's tough to explain. I guess you can say your leaders told you to vote that way. Good luck. You can explain how your counting students as one and a half people even though they're one human being. Think so. How the state should pay more than 75% of the cost of education. How are you going to explain if say, let's say you live in Beacon Falls. I hope people are listening on the speakers anyways, how are you going to explain that you voted against sending 10% more aid into your town?

DEPUTY SPEAKER LAVINE:

Ladies and gentlemen, ladies and gentlemen, will you please give the Minority Leader your attention. Thank you.

REP. JAEKLE: (122nd)

Mr. Speaker, I understand it's late. Yeah, there's been a lot of debate on this one amendment. It goes back to that frustration factor. I guess when you

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don't have the votes, at least you have a voice in this Chamber, and I understand that can be trying at times, but it is part of the very noble tradition of this Chamber, and I appreciate it, and I'm not trying to abuse it, but if the votes are locked up, and if members are elsewhere because their minds are made up, I at least want the record of tonight's debate to be a record, so nobody can claim they didn't know.

And I'll ask the questions. Beacon Falls, \$148,000 more money to your town in this amendment. Doesn't sound like much money? They're only going to get 1.4 million next year. When I said that's 10% more money, that's what it is. That's significant. I'm not going to read all the little numbers. I'm going to do some of the bigger ones.

You live in Berlin, \$719,000 more money. You're going to vote no? You're going to say your town doesn't need it? Bristol, my good friend and colleague from Bristol, Deputy Minority Leader. He was talking before about computer runs. You know we did a lot of computer runs.

I don't know how it works out. Every computer run we did Bristol got more money compared to the file copy. Maybe they produced the computer software. I don't know, but yeah, this is more money for Bristol.

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A million dollars more. \$641,000 for Cheshire.
\$155,000 more for Columbia. \$862,000 more from East
Hartford. \$505,000 more for East Haven, nearly a
million dollars more for my friend from Enfield.

Million dollars more. You're going to get \$2 1/2
million in educational funding next year. Can you
really explain how you'll say, we don't need a million
dollars more for the education of the children in my
community? How? Rip apart the methodology, if you
want. I haven't heard anybody really do that.

I've heard some numbers ripped apart. This takes
some money away from the big cities. Well, they're all
going to get more money than any of the towns around
here. My towns don't even get more money. My town is
Stratford. No more money even under this amendment.
The methodologies I couldn't find satisfactory; could
find some, but I couldn't stand up here in good
conscience.

I can argue these. They all make sense. Granby,
nearly \$400,000 more in educational aid for Granby.
Peanuts? You're only getting about 2 1/2 million next
year. This is significant, translated into mils.
Somebody will. Groton, \$844,000 more education aid.
How can you say no? I'd gather they might say yes.

Ledyard, nearly a half a million dollars more.

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Manchester, \$1.3 million more education aid. Milford, nearly a million dollars more. Newington, a million dollars more in educational aid. It's not going to be a targeted race next time. We tried that once before.

But seriously, everybody feel comfortable enough with the file copy's formula, that they're so satisfied with the philosophical purity of it all and believe that these variable changes don't make sense, that you can honestly vote no? More money for your communities? How?

Norwalk, \$1 million more. Plainville, half a million dollars more. Seymour, \$348,000 more. That's 10% more than your grant next year. Stamford, half a million dollars more. Can vote for a Senate amendment to do it, but you can't vote for a House amendment? How? How do you explain this?

Vernon, half a million dollars more. Wallingford, \$1.2 million more money. How can you go back home and explain you voted against it? I don't understand it. Watertown, half a million dollars more. West Haven, half a million dollars. You know, there's 101 towns that receive more money under this formula. I'm not going to read them all off. I'm not going to tell you the dollar amounts, but I am going to ask you this. How do you answer to the children in your towns? To

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the parents of the children that have to pay the property tax bills that educate your children?

Are you going to say, well when you measure a town's wealth you shouldn't count the state property tax payments, only the one that the residents pay? That makes sense? That's what the file copy says. Are you going to say that, well, we should pay nearly 85% of the school budgets in certain communities, but not in mine? That's what the file copy says, not the amendment.

Are you going to say that you're going to count children once as a whole person, quarter as a welfare recipient and another quarter as a mastery failure? Try to explain it. I couldn't, and the amendment tries to address those, and the results of that method change does produce dollarships.

Mr. Speaker, I won't go any further. I wanted the record to explain why I think the amendment makes sense, and that members know the dollar consequences to your towns. Your property taxpayers, and probably your educational institutions. The orders are vote no do so, but I really couldn't go through the debate without at least letting people know and putting on the record the consequences of our votes here tonight.

DEPUTY SPEAKER LAVINE:

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Will you remark further? If not, staff and guests come to the Well of the House, and the machine will be opened.

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll call. Will all members return to the Chamber? The House is taking a roll call vote. Will all members return to the Chamber, please?

The House of Representatives is voting by roll. Members, return to the Chamber, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Please check the roll call machine. Have all members voted? Please check the roll call machine to insure that your vote is properly recorded.

If all members have voted, the machine will be locked, and the Clerk will take a tally.

Clerk, please announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Amendment "B", to Senate Bill 539.

Total Number Voting	148
Necessary for Adoption	75
Those Voting Yea	62
Those Voting Nay	86
Those absent and not Voting	3

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DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

House "B" fails.

House Amendment Schedule "B".

Delete subdivision (2) of section 1 and insert the following in lieu thereof:

"(2) "Aid ration means one minus the ratio of a town's wealth to the state guaranteed wealth level, provided no town's aid ratio shall be less than zero or greater than seventy-five one hundredths."

Delete subdivision (5) of section 1 in its entirety and insert the following in lieu thereof:

"(5) "Education enhancement aid" means, for towns which in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1989, did not receive aid under the provisions of subsection (f) of section 10-262c of the general statutes, revision of 1958, revised to January 1, 1987, (A) base aid plus five per cent for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1990, and (B) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1991, and each fiscal year thereafter, the previous year's education enhancement aid plus five per cent."

Delete subdivision (22) of section 1 and insert the following in lieu thereof:

"(22) "State guaranteed wealth level" means 2.2007 times the town wealth of the town with the median wealth as calculated using the data of record on December first of the fiscal year prior to the year in which the grant is to be paid pursuant to section 3 of this act."

Delete subdivision (25) of section 1 and insert the following in lieu thereof:

"(25) "Total need students" means the sum of (A) the number of resident students in regular programs in the school year and (B) the greater of the number of children under the aid to families with dependent children program for the prior fiscal year and the mastery count for the school year, multiplied by .33."

Delete subdivision (26) of section 1 and insert the following in lieu thereof:

"(26) "Town wealth" means the sum of the adjusted equalized net grant list of a town and the adjusted grants in lieu of taxes factor, divided by the wealth student count of the town."

Delete subdivision (27) of section 1 and insert the following in lieu thereof:

"(27) "Wealth student count" of a town means the

sum of (A) the number of resident students in the town for the school year prior to the fiscal year in which the grant is to be paid pursuant to section 3 of this act and (B) the greater of the number of children under the aid to dependent children program in the town in the fiscal year two years prior to the fiscal year in which the grant is to be paid pursuant to section 3 of this act and the mastery count in the town for the school year prior to the fiscal year in which the grant is to be paid pursuant to section 3 of this act, multiplied by .33.

(28) "Grants in lieu of taxes factor" means the amount of the grant in lieu of taxes on state-owned real property paid to a town pursuant to sections 12-19a to 12-19c, inclusive, of the general statutes and the grant in lieu of taxes with respect to real property owned by any nonprofit institution of higher education or any nonprofit general hospital facility paid to a town pursuant to the provisions of sections 12-20a of the general statutes, as amended by section 1 of public act 87-418, and section 12-20b of the general statutes, as amended by section 4 of public act 87-115 and section 2 of public act 87-418, for the fiscal year prior to the fiscal year in which a grant is paid pursuant to the provisions of section 2 of this act divided by the ratio of the total tax imposed on all property in the municipality for such year and the equalized net grand list.

(29) "Adjusted grants in lieu of taxes factor" means the grants in lieu of taxes factor of a town multiplied by the ratio of the per capita income of the town to the per capita income of the town at the one hundredth percentile among all towns in the state ranked from lowest to highest in per capita income.

(30) "Bonus minimum aid" means, for towns in which the average of the number of children under the aid to dependent children program for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1988, and the mastery count for the school year ending June 30, 1989, was equal to or greater than twenty per cent of such town's resident students in regular programs for the school year ending June 30, 1989, (A) base aid plus eight per cent for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1990, and (B) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1991, and each fiscal year thereafter, the previous year's minimum aid plus eight per cent."

Delete subsection (b) of section 2 and insert the following in lieu thereof:

"(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, no town's equalization aid entitlement shall be less than its minimum aid,

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education enhancement aid or bonus minimum aid,
whichever is applicable."

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Will you remark further on the bill?

Representative Alan Schlesinger.

REP. SCHLESINGER: (114th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

One moment, please, sir. The hour is late and the
sooner we all pay attention, the sooner we all get to
go home. Representative Schlesinger.

REP. SCHLESINGER: (114th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize to speak at
this point in the evening, but this is a very, very
important bill. As a matter of fact, the most
important bill that will come before us this year, and
probably the next four years.

Mr. Speaker, I'm speaking tonight because I'd like
to look at the whole picture and talk about an
individual that this entire Chamber has ignored
including my side of the aisle, and that is the person
who foots the bill for this, the state taxpayer, not
the local taxpayer. The state taxpayer, which is one
and all of us.

I first would like to commend Representative Cohen

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for attempting to put together a formula that she was parochial on and I commend her in that effort, but I think Representative Cohen, as well as Senator Sullivan and other members of the Education Committee, have missed the boat with this formula.

Mr. Speaker, this formula is like a one night stand. We are making promises here tonight that we know we can't keep in the morning. Especially within the same current tax structure that we have right now. Mr. Speaker, this formula will cost the taxpayers of the State of Connecticut 900 million extra dollars over the four year period. I repeat that figure 900 million extra dollars.

Representative Smoko, as well as Representative Polinsky, know that next year we're using 300 million of one shot revenue just to pay for our current program which is only \$758 million. We're using the \$300 million stimulus of past old surplus funds. Mr. Speaker, we just cannot afford this formula in any context, for any of the towns. We just cannot afford this formula, without major changes in our tax structure that will hit if not in the next fiscal year, in fiscal 90.

It's a fact. It's not a joke. It's not a question. It will happen. You know, also, this

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formula, let's just forget about not being able to afford it, let's say we've got the income tax. We're going to pay for the new formula. It's here, but let's talk about how we're going to spend the money since we've got an income tax with this, let's talk about how we're going to spend it out.

I wonder how many members on the other side of the aisle as well as members on this side of the aisle know that the Town of Windsor Locks, which is relatively the same per capita income as the Town of Hebron. As a matter of fact, Hebron is slightly wealthier than the Town of Windsor Locks. Do you know that in new dollars, Windsor Locks gets \$66 per capita, and Hebron a slightly wealthier town gets \$764 per capita.

Twelve times as much per capita, and it's wealthier. Does that make any sense to anyone in this room? A wealthier town getting 12 times as much as a poorer town, but that's in the formula. Ansonia. Does anyone here think that Ansonia is wealthier than Cheshire? Anyone? Raise your hand if you believe that Ansonia is wealthier than Cheshire.

But do you know, in this formula, do you know that in this formula, Ansonia will get \$186 extra per capita and the Town of Cheshire gets \$444 extra per capita.

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If you look at this formula, you would think that Cheshire is poverty and Ansonia is the gold coast. It makes no sense.

Let's take the Hartford area, East Hartford and Manchester. Similar towns. They both get similar funding currently. As a matter of fact, Manchester is slightly wealthier than is East Hartford.

Do you know that by the end of this formula, Manchester the wealthier town is going to get \$344 per capita, East Hartford the poorer town will get \$104 per capita. Why? Why does a wealthier town get three times as much as the poorer town right in the same area. It makes no sense.

Waterbury, one of our great cities. Waterbury. A town with per capita income of \$8,800, according to 1983, the last year we have statistics. Killingly, a similar town as far as wealth. \$8,500. Relatively the same. Our city of Waterbury will get \$315 extra dollars per capita, Killingly will get \$625 more per capita. They're the same town and Waterbury gets half the increase. I don't understand why.

I just don't understand why, but we're going to pass it.

And lastly, Danbury, Danbury, a town with \$11,000 per capita income in 83, will get \$91 more per capita.

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But yet do you know that New Fairfield, a much wealthier town than Danbury. Is there anyone in this Chamber that does not believe that New Fairfield is wealthier than Danbury on average. They are both statistically, New Fairfield is a wealthier town than Danbury, yet Danbury will get \$91 per capita. New Fairfield, are you ready for this? \$469 per capita. Five times as much aid for the wealthier town. Does this make any sense?

Now I know what Representative Cohen might say, well, they got more students in that town and this is an education formula. Come on. This formula makes up 60% of the revenue sharing that we give to towns. This is not an education formula. This formula is revenue sharing. This is the revenue sharing formula.

You cannot just look at students. We cannot afford to give Hebron 12 times the aid than Windsor Locks, when Hebron is a wealthier town. It makes no sense. This formula is dramatically flawed, dramatically flawed. It doesn't do anything for education.

You know what this formula does? It says if you've got good political clout, you're going to get the bucks. You got the clout, you get the bucks. You got the clout on the equity committee, you get the bucks. That's where it's targeted.

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This is a mistake. This is a mistake that we are going to live to regret for those of us who are back in this Chamber in 1990 and 91, you remember this day in April, or May, because it's going to live in infamy.

This is wrong. And with that, Mr. Speaker, the Clerk has an amendment, NO. LCO 4757. If he calls, I'd like to summarize.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The Clerk is in possession of LCO 4757 designated House Amendment Schedule "C". Will the Clerk please call.

CLERK:

LCO 4757 designated House Schedule "C" offered by Representative Schlesinger.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The gentleman has requested permission to summarize. Is there objection? Hearing none, Sir, please proceed.

REP. SCHLESINGER: (114th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What this amendment does is it takes educational excellence and the GTB formula of the current level of funding and it gives every town in the State of Connecticut an increase. It locks in your GTB in educational excellence, which has grown dramatically over the last three years and gives you an

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8% increase next year and 6% the following three years.
I can't make it any simpler than that.

Mr. Speaker, I move adoption at this time.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The question is on adoption of House "C". Will you
remark, Sir.

REP. SCHLESINGER: (114th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In light of my earlier
comments, we've got serious problems and serious
implications with this formula. This amendment does
two things. It's as simple as a COLA. What it does
is, it saves the State \$340 million of the \$900 million
savings and it does the same skewing as our old
formulas. It goes no farther than our old formulas.
It saves 40% of the money and it says to the cities, it
says to the towns, we're going to give you the same
piece of the pie. We're going to make the pie larger,
but we're going to give you the same fraction of the
pie. Your pie slice is not going to change.

We're going to give you a bigger slice because the
pie is getting bigger, but we're not going to start
skewing in strange aberrations that give the Town of
Windsor Locks one-twelfth of the increase that the Town
of Hebron gets.

There's mistakes here, and this amendment corrects

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it and gives us a policy that the State of Connecticut can afford, just barely afford with tax increases, but will probably avert a State income tax.

I don't see how anyone could vote against this amendment if they're looking at the long term implications on State coffers as well as fairness and logical, the local increases based on the cost of living adjustment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Will you remark further on House "C". Will you remark further on House "C". Representative Jerry Langlois.

REP. LANGLOIS: (51st)

Mr. Speaker, one of the factors I like about the file copy as compared to this amendment is its simplicity.

It's really wealth times need and that's what gives us the aid for our municipalities in the file copy, so if I could, a question, through you, to the proponent.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Langlois, please frame your question, Sir.

REP. LANGLOIS: (51st)

Yes. Could you tell me in this amendment, how need is measured either through remedial or through AFDC

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proxy, or through any other measure?

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Schlesinger, do you care to respond?

REP. SCHLESINGER: (114th)

Yes. Through you, Mr. Speaker, it is addressed in the same way we are currently addressing it in the current fiscal year, 1989. The benefit per student will remain the same with a cost of living adjustment of 8% for the first year. The following years will be a 6%, 6% and 6% increase. It is skewed the same exact way that the current formula is arranged in fiscal 88-89.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Langlois, you have the floor, Sir.

REP. LANGLOIS: (51st)

One of the things I've always thought for myself is aid for eastern Connecticut. We've seen in I believe, the Hartford Courant did a story a couple of years back, contrasting the schools of Killingly versus Greenwich, the different educational programs available to each of those students, so a question, through you, to the proponent. Could you tell me, as compared to file copy, how the Town of Killingly does in fiscal year 1992-93 under your amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Schlesinger.

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REP. SCHLESINGER: (114th)

Yes. The Town of Killingly would receive an 8% increase in the first year from the current 88-89 base as every other town will receive in the 88-89 years. They will have \$6,901,000 under my amendment in 89-90 in the first year of the transition they would get an 8% increase which would bring them up to \$7,453,000, again going from \$6.9 million to \$7.4 million in my amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Langlois.

REP. LANGLOIS: (51st)

And could the proponent tell the Body, the Chamber, if that represents a loss or a gain, as compared to the file copy, and if so, how much is a loss.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Schlesinger.

REP. SCHLESINGER: (114th)

Yes, through you, because again, Killingly is perhaps one of the most, or the weirdest aberrations of any of the towns in here and that's why I was using it in my example. They will obviously receive a loss because they were receiving for example twelve times as much aid as Windsor Locks. So what we will be doing is bringing them up from \$6.9 to \$7.45 million instead of

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bringing them up to \$7.2 million in the first year. And of course, the implications are more dramatic as you go out in further years because the COLA is only 6% where Killingly's aid is dramatically increased.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Langlois, you have the floor.

REP. LANGLOIS: (51st)

And through you, Mr. Speaker. During your presentation you also used the Town of Hebron as an example. Could you tell us the loss that the Town of Hebron would encounter in your amendment versus file copy in fiscal year 1992-93?

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Schlesinger.

REP. SCHLESINGER: (114th)

Yes. Through you, Mr. Speaker, again, because of the weird skewing, it would have the same based effect that it will for Killingly. You picked the two towns that do receive outlandish aid, compared to what they're receiving currently, and obviously, they would have the most profound affects based on this amendment. You would go from an aid of \$2.286 million in the base year. Under my plan, you would go to \$2.469 in the first year instead of \$2.719 under the file copy and of course, again, the differences would become more

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profound because of compounding as you go out into the farther out years.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Representative Langlois.

REP. LANGLOIS: (51st)

Mr. Speaker, I guess I could continue this course of questioning and go through many different towns, but I won't do that, due to the lateness of the hour. But I would note that this amendment causes losses as compared to the file in many towns, especially in many towns in eastern Connecticut. The Town of Griswold for instance, would lose \$1.2 million in fiscal year 92-93.

The Town of Groton would lose \$3.2 million. This amendment is much different than the previous amendment that was offered.

I guess the reason I object to it, or the primary reason I object to it is because it represents a simplistic approach to a complicated problem. I started this by saying that we had simplicity, wealth times need, but that's measured in many different factors in the formula, and it was measured through the work of the equity committee, which had bipartisan support and bipartisan participation.

And I object to this amendment because it does not

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consider remedial aid that's necessary. It does not consider need in terms of either measuring it by remedial help that's necessary, or by measuring it by AFDC or other proxy.

It does not really address the vast differences of wealth between communities. And one comparison that I find to be especially good comparison is the comparison of the amount of property wealth. We've had discussions about income, and how much income Darien has versus the City of Hartford. But let's talk about wealth per need pupil.

In the Town of Killingly, that's \$44,000 per need pupil. In the Town of Greenwich, it's \$1 million per need pupil. It's a vast difference in wealth. This amendment does not recognize that, does not recognize need. It's simplistic, inequitable and it's really unfair. I'd urge a no vote on this amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Will you remark further on House "C"?

Representative Cohen.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in rising to object to the amendment, I would say that this amendment accepts the premise that the GTB formula and the education enhancement formula are perfect as they

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are with relationship to disparity and therefore, just adds cost of living on top of their formula, those formulas. I don't believe that's true. I urge rejection and I ask that when the vote be taken, it be taken by roll.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The lady has requested a roll call vote. Pursuant to House Rule 39 the Chair will try your minds. All those in favor of a roll call vote, please indicate by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

The requisite 20% having been satisfied, when the vote is taken, it will be taken by roll. Will you remark further on House "C"? Representative Gary Berner.

REP. BERNER: (10th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to speak very, very briefly, but very strongly in support of this amendment. I want to associate my remarks with those of Representative Schlesinger.

And contrary to the remarks of Representative Langlois, I think this particular amendment does add a note of fairness and simplisticness to the formula. I

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think that if we take a look very, very briefly at an example that Representative Schlesinger brought out, we can see just where these numbers skewed. And he did allude to the towns of East Hartford and Manchester.

Now East Hartford is a population of about 52,000 and Manchester just shy of 50,000. East Hartford's per capita income is just a little bit under \$11,000 and Manchester a little bit under \$12,000, so right there you can see Manchester is a little bit higher per capita income.

But according to the file copy, if you were to take the file copy and watch what happens to the grant, to the municipalities, over the four years, the Town of Manchester would receive an additional \$17 million, while the Town of East Hartford would receive only an additional \$5 million. This just can't be right.

We're talking about two towns with a great deal in common population-wise, income-wise, geographically, the type of makeup of the district and yet we see a tremendous amount of difference between the aid that would go to my town as well as to the Town of Manchester. It just does not make sense.

Further, in terms of comments made by Representative Cohen, the towns do have an awful lot, excuse me, these two towns do have a lot in common and

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there should not be as much disparity between these two numbers. I think Representative Schlesinger has an excellent amendment here and also adds a note of fiscal responsibility that could very well save us from an income tax in the years to come and I do urge adoption of this amendment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Will you remark further on House "C"? If not, Representative Schlesinger.

REP. SCHLESINGER: (114th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, Mr. Speaker, those folks from Danbury and those folks from East Hartford and several other towns and cities in our State, if you do not vote for this amendment, you are saying spend another \$340 million, State of Connecticut and give my town \$2 million less. That's this amendment. If you vote against this amendment, you are saying, spend \$340 million, not a couple million, \$340 million more and give my town \$2 million less. That's if you vote against this amendment. I just want you to know that.

In East Hartford, in East Hartford you're saying if you vote no on this amendment, you are saying, State of Connecticut get the income tax. Spend \$340 million more and give my town \$2 million less. That's East

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Hartford. Spend \$340 million more and give my town \$2 million less.

Windsor Locks, you're saying spend \$340 million more and give my town \$297,000 less. That's if you vote against this amendment. There are 60 towns in this position, 60 towns that can get their fair share, a cost of living adjustment based upon what they're getting currently, not have an income tax and get more for their town. I don't see how you can refuse that amendment.

And don't vote for it because of more money for your town. Vote for it because of fiscal responsibility. I'd rather have you do it that way.

There is no political, Republican-Democrat motivation in this amendment. My towns on this side of the aisle get hurt just as much.

I am trying to say to you, on both sides of the aisle, what we're doing here today is the last nail in the income tax coffin. Mr. Speaker, I pray that some members on both sides of this aisle will do what is right and try to avert an income tax, and try to stop towns that are wealthier to get twelve times as much aid as poorer towns.

The Hamdens of this world, the Windsor Locks of this world, the Danburys of this world, speak out.

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Speak out on this amendment and say it's right. It's as right as educational enhancement was three years ago. It's right today and it will stop an income tax. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Will you remark further on House "C"? If not, staff and guests to the well of the House. Members please be seated. The machine will be opened.

CLERK:

The House of Representative is voting by roll call.

Will all members return to the Chamber. The House is voting by roll. Members to the Chamber please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Have all members voted? Have all members voted? Please check the roll call machine to insure that your vote is properly recorded.

If all members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

The Clerk please announce the tally.

CLERK:

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House Amendment "C" to Senate Bill 539.

Total number voting	148
Necessary for adoption	75
Those voting yea	33
Those voting nay	115
Those absent and not voting	3

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

House "C" fails.

House Amendment Schedule "C".

Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the following in lieu thereof:

"Section 1. Subsection (a) of section 10-261 of the general statutes, is amended by adding the following subdivisions:

(NEW) (16) "Aid per student" means (A) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1989, base and divided by the number of resident students in the town for the 1988-1989 school year and (B) for the fiscal years ending June 30, 1990, June 30, 1991, and June 1992, the school aid grant pursuant to section 10-262c, as amended by section 2 of this act, for the previous year divided by the number of resident students in the town for the previous year.

(NEW) (17) "Base aid" of a town means an amount equal to the sum of (A) the amount of aid allocated to the town in the year ending June 30, 1989, pursuant to the provisions of section 10-262c, as amended by section 2 of this act, and (B) the amount of aid allocated for the benefit of resident students in the town for the year ending June 30, 1989, pursuant to the provisions of sections 20-257b, as amended by sections 1 and 2 of public act 87-325, sections 2 and 3 of public act 87-488, sections 1 to 3, inclusive, of public act 87-2 and section 7 of public act 87-250, 10-257c, as amended by sections 4, 5 and 15 of public act 87-2, sections 4 and 5 of public act 87-488,

section 3 of public act 87-325, 10-257d, as amended by section 6 of public act 87-488, sections 16 and 27 of public act 87-2, and 10-257f of the general statutes, as amended by section 6 of public act 87-2, provided that if the amount of aid paid to a town pursuant to said section 10-257f is less than the amount allocated, then the base aid for the town shall be reduced by the amount of the difference.

(NEW) (18) "Resident students" means the number of pupils of the town enrolled in public schools at the expense of the town on October first or the full school day immediately preceding such date, provided the number shall be reduced by one-one hundred eightieth for each full school day by which the board of education serving the town failed to maintain a school year of one hundred eighty days in the school year immediately preceding such date, unless the state board of education authorized the shortening of a school year pursuant to the provisions of section 10-15 and shall be increased by one-one hundred eightieth for each full school day by which the board of education serving the town maintained a school year beyond one hundred eighty days in the school year immediately preceding such date and be increased by the aggregate days of membership of all pupils of the town attending school at the expense of the town during the summer session immediately preceding such date divided by one hundred eighty, except that if a board of education has implemented scheduling of school sessions year-round, the state board of education may adjust the number so that no loss or gain in state aid occurs because of the type of scheduling used; "enrolled" shall include pupils who are scheduled for vacation on the above date and who are expected to return to school as scheduled.

Sec. 2. Section 10-262c of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

(a) Each town maintaining schools according to law [whose adjusted equalized net grand list per capita falls at or below that of the guaranteed wealth level shall be paid a grant, except as provided in subsections (b), (d), (e) and (f) of this section, in an amount equal to the product of (1) the school tax rate times (2) the difference between the guaranteed wealth level and the adjusted equalized net grand list per capita for the town, times (3) the total student population of the town.] SHALL BE ENTITLED TO A SCHOOL AID GRANT AS FOLLOWS:

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(1) FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1990, A GRANT IN AN AMOUNT EQUAL TO THE AID PER STUDENT FOR THE PREVIOUS FISCAL YEAR, MULTIPLIED BY 1.08, MULTIPLIED BY THE NUMBER OF RESIDENT STUDENTS IN THE TOWN FOR THE 1989-1990 SCHOOL YEAR;

(2) FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1991, A GRANT IN AN AMOUNT EQUAL TO THE AID PER STUDENT FOR THE PREVIOUS FISCAL YEAR, MULTIPLIED BY 1.06, MULTIPLIED BY THE NUMBER OF RESIDENT STUDENTS IN THE TOWN FOR THE 1990-1991 SCHOOL YEAR;

(3) FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1992, A GRANT IN AN AMOUNT EQUAL TO THE AID PER STUDENT FOR THE PREVIOUS FISCAL YEAR, MULTIPLIED BY 1.06, MULTIPLIED BY THE NUMBER OF RESIDENT STUDENTS IN THE TOWN FOR THE 1991-1991 SCHOOL YEAR; AND

(4) FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1993, A GRANT IN AN AMOUNT EQUAL TO THE AID PER STUDENT FOR THE PREVIOUS FISCAL YEAR, MULTIPLIED BY 1.06, MULTIPLIED BY THE NUMBER OF RESIDENT STUDENTS IN THE TOWN FOR THE 1992-1993 SCHOOL YEAR.

(b) The amount due each town pursuant to the provisions of subsection (a) of this section shall be paid by the comptroller, upon certification of the commissioner of education, to the treasurer of each town entitled to such aid in instalments as follows: Twenty-five per cent of the grant in October, twenty-five per cent of the grant in January of the following year and the balance in the April following said January payment, provided, if as a result of changes in data elements required pursuant to this section for the purposes of calculating [general state] SCHOOL aid to towns, funds are necessary beyond the appropriations level, the general assembly may, through action of the finance advisory committee or otherwise, appropriate sufficient funds for that year or may appropriate funds in the next fiscal year, and provided further, if as a result of such data changes, a grant reduction to any town is required, such reduction shall be made at the direction of such town in the current fiscal year or in the subsequent fiscal year as a reduction to that town's [general state] SCHOOL aid.

[(c) For purposes of this section and section 10-262e, "full entitlement" means the amount in general state aid any town would receive pursuant to the

provisions of subsections (a), (e) and (f) of this section and subsection (b) of section 10-262e at a funding level of one hundred per cent; and for purposes of this section "full funding" means the sum of full entitlements for all towns. The state shall appropriate for the purposes of this section:

(1) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1984, three hundred seventy-seven million seven hundred sixty-nine thousand seven hundred two dollars;

(2) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1985, four hundred twenty-one million three hundred eighty-four thousand three hundred sixty dollars; and

(3) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1986, and each fiscal year thereafter full funding.

(d) Each town shall receive per pupil:

(1) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1984: (A) For a town entitled to receive a grant in excess of two hundred fifty dollars per pupil calculated pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, or in the case of a town whose public school students attend a kindergarten through grade twelve regional school, two hundred seventy-five dollars, the amount of general state aid received on a per pupil basis, as defined pursuant to section 10-261, revision of 1958, revised to 1983, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1983, plus or minus a percentage of the difference between the amount of such state aid received on a per pupil basis and the amount of general state aid the town would be eligible to receive on a per pupil basis, as defined pursuant to section 10-261, under full entitlement for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1984. Said percentage of the difference shall be uniform for all towns described in this subparagraph and shall be calculated so that general state aid for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1984, shall equal the appropriation required to implement the provisions of subsection (c) of this section; (B) for a town entitled to receive a grant of two hundred fifty dollars per pupil or less calculated pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, or in the case of a town whose public school students attend a kindergarten through grade twelve regional school, two hundred seventy-five dollars or less, the grant amount pursuant to said subsection (a) calculated on a per pupil basis, provided no town shall receive a per pupil grant less than ninety per cent of two hundred fifty

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dollars, or in the case of a town whose public school students attend a kindergarten through grade twelve regional school, no less than ninety per cent of two hundred seventy-five dollars; and (C) a change after July 1, 1983, in a town's data elements required pursuant to this section for the purposes of calculating general state aid to such town shall not cause a recalculation of grants to other towns, but shall be an adjustment to that town's grant only. In determining such town's adjusted grant, the percentage of the difference calculated pursuant to this subdivision prior to the revision in the data shall be used. Such adjustment shall be made pursuant to subsection (b) of this section.

(2) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1985; (A) For a town entitled to receive a grant in excess of two hundred fifty dollars per pupil calculated pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, or in the case of a town whose public school students attend a kindergarten through grade twelve regional school, two hundred seventy-five dollars, the amount of general state aid received on a per pupil basis, as defined pursuant to section 10-261, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1984, plus or minus a percentage of the difference between the amount of such state aid received on a per pupil basis and the amount of general state aid the town would be eligible to receive on a per pupil basis, as defined pursuant to said section 10-261, under full entitlement for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1985. Said percentage of the difference shall be uniform for all towns described in this subdivision and shall be calculated so that general state aid for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1985, shall equal the appropriation required to implement the provisions of subsection (c) of this section; (B) for a town entitled to receive a grant of two hundred fifty dollars per pupil or less calculated pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, or in the case of a town whose public school students attend a kindergarten through grade twelve regional school, two hundred seventy-five dollars or less, the grant amount pursuant to said subsection (a) calculated on a per pupil basis, provided no town shall receive a per pupil grant less than ninety-five per cent of two hundred fifty dollars, or in the case of a town whose public school students attend a kindergarten through grade twelve regional school, no less than ninety-five per cent of two hundred seventy-five dollars; and (C) a change after January 1, 1984, in a town's data elements required

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pursuant to this section for the purposes of calculating general state aid to such town shall not cause a recalculation of grants to other towns, but shall be an adjustment to that town's grant only. In determining such town's adjusted grant, the percentage of the difference calculated pursuant to this subdivision prior to the revision in the data shall be used. Such adjustment shall be made pursuant to subsection (b) of this section.

(3) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1986, and each fiscal year thereafter, full entitlement.

(e) A town whose public school students attend a kindergarten through grade twelve regional school shall receive, in addition to the general state aid received pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, an amount equal to twenty-five dollars for each student from such town in average daily membership in such regional school for the school year three years prior to the fiscal year in which payment is to be made pursuant to this section. No town shall receive such additional general state aid in excess of the town's minimum expenditure requirement as defined in subsection (b) of section 10-262e.

(f) Except as provided in subsection (d) of this section, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1980, and each fiscal year thereafter, no town shall receive a grant less than two hundred fifty dollars, or in the case of a town whose public school students attend a kindergarten through grade twelve regional school two hundred seventy-five dollars, for each student from such town in average daily membership for the school year three years prior to the fiscal year in which payment is to be made pursuant to this section.]

Sec. 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 1989."

DEPUTY SPEAKER CIBES:

Will you remark further on the bill? Representative Robert Farr.

REP. FARR: (19th)

Mr. Speaker, the Clerk has an amendment. Would the

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Clerk please call and I be allowed to summarize LCO No. 4840.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Would the House come to order. We only have a few more minutes in this debate. We just have, I've been informed that all of the official amendments have been completed. I think the last vote tally indicates that's probably the case. Representative Farr has 4840, House "D". Will the Clerk please call.

CLERK:

LCO 4840 designated House Schedule "D" offered by Representative Farr et al.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Is there objection to summarization? If not, Representative Farr.

REP. FARR: (19th)

Mr. Speaker, what this amendment does is provide full funding for a program which is called inter-community programs for disadvantaged children. It is the Project Concern program that affects 14 communities in the State. This would provide for full funding for that program. Mr. Speaker, I move adoption of the amendment.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Will you remark on the amendment? If not, all

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those in favor of the amendment --

REP. FARR: (19th)

Mr. Speaker, I would first ask that when a vote is taken, it be taken by roll.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

The question is for a roll call vote. All those in favor, please indicate by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

An adequate number is arrived at. Will you remark further?

REP. FARR: (19th)

Yes, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Representative Farr.

REP. FARR: (19th)

Mr. Speaker, let me explain what this amendment is. It is a relatively simple and modest proposal. We've heard a lot about programs for reducing desegregation in the State of Connecticut.

There is in effect, right now, in the State of Connecticut a program called Project Concern. Fourteen suburban communities participate in taking disadvantaged youngsters from the inner cities. Those

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14 communities participate in a program whereby they get paid one-half of their GTB grant for doing so.

What happens is, that the balance of the educational cost to those youngsters is picked up by their community. This program when it was first placed in effect in the Greater Hartford Area, had more than 1,000 youngsters from the inner cities being educated in the suburban communities. That program has been decreasing. It is not down about 700 youngsters. The major reason it's being reduced is because quite frankly, the suburban communities are not in a position to pay for the cost of educating youngsters who are not their own youngsters.

Let me give you a few examples. The Town of Manchester under this bill --

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

The Chair is going to insist that the House come to order. Further, that the debate be concise and I think that will help us all along. Representative Farr, you have the floor.

REP. FARR: (19th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under this proposal, the Town of Manchester would be paid for the cost of educating, the full cost of educating the youngsters that they currently receive as part of Project Concern.

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According to the Office of Fiscal Analysis, that would mean they would get, receive an additional \$259,000. That is money that is being spent by the taxpayers of Manchester to educate youngsters from the City of Hartford, because Manchester believes in Project Concern and participating in a program that helps disadvantaged youngsters.

The Town of Plainville would receive \$95,000. The Town of Granby, \$62,000. The Town of South Windsor, \$192,000, down to Suffield, \$41,800. That's not money that would be used by those communities to educate their own youngsters. It is money that they are currently using to educate youngsters from another community, as a commitment on their part to help disadvantaged youngsters.

We've got before us a school financing program that will spend \$868 million and it isn't even sure that any of that money is actually going to go to education. What this amendment does, is, it takes, it would propose that a very small some of money, some \$3 million, would actually be used to educate disadvantaged youngsters in suburban communities.

My community supports that program very much, but we're quite frankly, hard pressed to pay for the education of other, youngsters from the City of

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Hartford. And it seems to me, it doesn't make any sense for the State of Connecticut to say to us that we should be doing that.

The Commissioner of Education has come up with a program that he says that he supports that would provide incentives for this type of program, and when I ask him, where's the money, he says, well, nobody's every asked for it. Well, here's the request. Here's an opportunity for this legislative Body to do something, to do something about inequality in education in the State of Connecticut.

This amendment, I suggest to you, would probably do more than the underlining bill, and for a far lower, smaller cost. I would urge passage of the amendment.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

We are going to have a very hard time getting through the six additional bills we have scheduled for this evening, but, this morning I stand corrected. Will you remark further on House Amendment Schedule "D"? Representative Fusco.

REP. FUSCO: (81st)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, a question to the proponent, through you.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Please frame your question.

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REP. FUSCO: (81st)

Representative Farr, you mention Hartford in this. Could you explain how this amendment affects Hartford?

REP. FARR: (19th)

Yes. At the present time, Hartford participates in a program called Project Concern where they bus about 700 youngsters into suburban communities. When they do that, they get paid one-half of their GTB, they get counted. One-half of their youngsters in the GTB. This bill does not change that. It stays exactly the same.

This bill will not result in any additional money for the City of Hartford. What this bill will do, is it will pay those suburban communities that receive the 700 youngsters for the cost of educating those 700 youngsters.

It continues to provide funding for Hartford, even though they don't have the youngsters, but for the first time it provides for full funding for the suburban communities for the educational costs of educating Hartford's youngsters. This is a reasonable approach.

REP. FUSCO: (81st)

Thank you.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

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Representative Naomi Cohen.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in rising to oppose this amendment, let me suggest to the Chamber that Project Concern and other voluntary methods of intra-district programs for youngsters from urban and suburban communities is best left to the look that we have all voted to discuss in the next year as it relates to desegregation of our schools in Connecticut.

This amendment in the six years that I have been here, all of which, during all of which I've served on the Education Committee, has never come forward. I've never had anyone call and say this is an important issue and we cannot go forward unless we do this. I suggest to the Chamber at this hour, that this is something that can wait. It has an almost \$3.5 million fiscal note, and clearly, we have time next year to address it.

I urge rejection.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Will all members please be seated. Staff and guests to the well of the House. Will you remark further? Will you remark further? Tough decision. Representative Fleming.

REP. FLEMING: (16th)

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Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in favor of this amendment, and I think some of the things Representative Cohen said to some extent are correct. I think whether or not this amendment passes or not, and whether or not the suburban communities get the money or not, this amendment I think would fairly give to them, Project Concern will continue to operate in those school systems because there is a commitment out there.

I still think that this amendment is fair in a sense that it says to those suburban schools that have participated in Project Concern, that it is important enough, at least on a State level, for the State to properly fund the program.

So, whether or not you support the amendment, I don't think it will mean an end to the program, but I think that your support of this amendment would show that you agree with the suburban communities that on a voluntary basis, are trying to do something in terms of equal educational opportunity in the State.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Representative Farr, didn't he say exactly what you wanted to say? Representative Farr.

REP. FARR: (19th)

Mr. Speaker. One last comment, the comment that I

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should have anticipated and intended to do, which was, wait until next year. I've been here for eight years. Quite frankly, when we got here for the first few years when I discussed this issue, I was told, well, we haven't reached 100% funding of GTB.

We finally got to 100% at GTB and I said, well, let's look at this issue again. They said, first we take care of the teachers' salary. So then we did the teachers' salary for three years. Then we got through with the teachers' salary, we had to look at it again and I was told again last year, we'll look at it when we look at the whole question of educational funding.

This year, we've come up with a new grant for four years. Next year we'll say, well, we have to phase in the educational grant for the next four years. We'll look at it four years down the road.

I suggest to you the time is now. This is an appropriate amendment.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Will all members please be seated. Staff and guests to the well of the House. Will you remark further? If not, the machine will be opened.

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll call. Will all members return to the Chamber. The

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House is voting by roll. All members return to the Chamber at this time, please.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted and is your vote properly recorded.

If all the members have voted, oh, I'm sorry, I thought they had.

Have all the members voted? Have all the members now voted? If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

Will the Clerk please announce the tally.

CLERK:

House Amendment "D" to Senate Bill 539.

Total number voting	149
Necessary for adoption	75
Those voting yea	63
Those voting nay	86
Those absent and not voting	2

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

The amendment is defeated.

House Amendment Schedule "D".

After section 7, insert the following and renumber the remaining sections accordingly:

"Sec. 8. Section 10-266j of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

(a) For the purposes of this section: "Intercommunity programs for disadvantaged children" means educational programs or services designed to improve or accelerate the education of children whose educational achievement has been or is being restricted by economic, social or environmental disadvantages. "Receiving district" means the school district which accepts pupils from another school district in accordance with an agreement between it and one or more boards of education to provide an educational program for participating children which has been approved by the state board of education. "Sending district" means the school district responsible by law for the education of the children participating in such a program.

(b) Any local or regional board of education may make a binding written agreement with any other such board or group of such boards to implement intercommunity programs for children under this section. [Such written agreement shall include mutually acceptable terms concerning, but not limited to, the tuition per child which shall be paid by the sending district to the receiving district.]

(c) (1) Each sending district shall be eligible to receive, subject to an appropriation therefor, for each child participating in an intercommunity program under this section which has been approved by the state board of education, an amount equal to three hundred dollars for each such [pupil] CHILD. (2) Each school district which transports such children under an agreement made pursuant to this section shall be eligible to receive for each such [pupil] CHILD transported from one school district to another school district, subject to an appropriation therefor, an amount equal to one-half the cost of transporting each such child. (3) NOTWITHSTANDING THE PROVISIONS OF SUBDIVISION (19) OF SECTION 1 OF THIS ACT, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1990, AND EACH FISCAL YEAR THEREAFTER, (A) EACH TOWN WHICH IS A SENDING DISTRICT SHALL FOR EACH SUCH CHILD ADD ONE-HALF OF A PUPIL TO THE TOWN'S NUMBER OF RESIDENT STUDENTS, AS DEFINED IN SAID SUBDIVISION (19), AND (B) EACH TOWN WHICH IS A RECEIVING DISTRICT SHALL NOT INCLUDE ANY SUCH CHILDREN IN SUCH NUMBER OF RESIDENT STUDENTS.

(d) FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1990, AND EACH FISCAL YEAR THEREAFTER, EACH TOWN WHICH IS A

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RECEIVING DISTRICT SHALL RECEIVE A GRANT EQUAL TO THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN ACCEPTED FROM ANOTHER SCHOOL DISTRICT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION, FOR SUCH YEAR MULTIPLIED BY THE RATIO OF THE TOWN'S REGULAR PROGRAM EXPENDITURES, AS DEFINED IN SUBDIVISION (17) OF SECTION 1 OF THIS ACT, FOR THE PRIOR FISCAL YEAR AND THE SUM OF THE NUMBER OF SUCH CHILDREN AND SUCH NUMBER OF RESIDENT STUDENTS, FOR THE PRIOR YEAR."

Delete the renumbered section 10 and insert the following in lieu thereof:

"Sec. 10. This act shall take effect July 1, 1988, except that section 9 shall take effect July 1, 1989."

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Will you remark further on the bill? If not, will members please be seated. Staff and guests to the well of the House.

I've always had a difficult time choosing between two lovely ladies. Representative Emmons. And, it even complicates the choice when it includes Representative Migliaro.

Representative Emmons.

REP. EMMONS: (101st)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to introduce an amendment, but I would like to ask the proponent of the bill a question, and I realize it's late, but this is a major piece of legislation and I didn't call it this late.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

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It is late and it is major and I'm glad we're finally getting to the fundamental questions.

Representative Emmons.

REP. EMMONS: (101st)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Representative Cohen, I would like to, I will preface my comments, that in all the discussions we've had, basically the thrust of this bill is to get to \$4800 in per pupil expenditures in a certain period of time and I've been looking at it more or less not how much money does my community or every other community get, but what does that \$4800 target mean to the local budgets in my community or my communities.

And so I did go through the mathematical process in trying to figure the formula out. And the question I have is when I read through it, you really, your effort is based upon your number of students.

However, numbers of students does not include special ed students that are not, or sent out a district for education and it appears from the file a special ed student that is a resident student that has more than half of its day in special ed classes. Is that correct?

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Representative Cohen.

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REP. COHEN: (15th)

Through you, Sir. Yes, Representative Emmons that is correct. Let me tell you that the equity committee in discussing who should be counted toward meeting the foundation level decided not to include special ed students, not to include students who received, for whom money was paid through the compensatory education grant, the priority school grant. This is regular education students, Ma'am.

REP. EMMONS: (101st)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The other question is that when you look at the total effort that a town makes, your special education expenditures do not count. Is that correct?

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Representative Cohen.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Through you, Mr. Speaker, special education is outside this program and special education expenditures are reimbursed on the sliding schedule for that grant.

REP. EMMONS: (101st)

Yes, Mr. Speaker. I realize that it's reimbursed on a sliding grant, but some communities for every dollar you spend on special ed, you only get back 50 cents. So there is a 50 cent effort on the part of a

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municipality that would not be concluded in your effort towards getting at \$4800 per student expenditure.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, the other question is that my understanding is that all costs for transporting students, your bus school costs are also not included as part of effort.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Through you, Mr. Speaker, transportation costs, Representative Emmons are not included and were not included under the GTB formula, either.

REP. EMMONS: (101st)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, just for the enlightenment of the Body here, I think when you have looked at the CEPEC figures that list the per pupil spending per town, and then it segregates it out into operating expenses and capital expenses, that you in trying to relate it to where your town is supposed is now going to get to, that you really need to pay attention to the special ed problem because you may take one student out, but that student may be costing you \$30,000.

So there is going to be an interplay there that is difficult to be able to calculate out right now. What this formula is going to mean to you, until somebody goes through all the statistics town by town and

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segregates out special ed and special ed kids that no longer will be included in your formula.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Will you remark further on the bill? If not, will members, oh, Representative Schmidle.

REP. SCHMIDLE: (106th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you, a question to Representative Cohen, please.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Please frame your question, Madam.

REP. SCHMIDLE: (106th)

Thank you. Representative Cohen, I understand what this formula is trying to do and I understand that the AFDC students certainly need additional help, additional assistance, and I certainly understand the students who have not been successful in their mastery tests do. But what guarantee do we have with this particular formula that those students who need it the most are going to, in fact, get that extra assistance that they need.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Representative Cohen.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Through you, Mr. Speaker, to Representative Schmidle. Please understand that the AFDC factor and

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the mastery test factor are proxies that the committees have determined are representative of educational need, and then they are factored into the formula.

If you are concerned that a student has fallen below the accepted level on the mastery test, be assured that through other grants like the compensatory education grant, the priority school grant, drop out prevention grant, the summer school grant, those students will in fact be eligible for remedial education.

REP. SCHMIDLE: (106th)

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure that my question was answered. Are you saying to me Representative Cohen, that if at a certain point in time each student in a community is getting \$4800, we're spending \$4800 on each student and if in fact you have 500 students out of that community, say, of 5,000 who are eligible for the extra help, will they be getting that extra help out of the extra money that's allocated in this formula for them?

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

It's difficult to hear the question. I think it's important that the Chamber do so. Representative Cohen for a response.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

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Thank you. I'd appreciate it Mr. Speaker, now that it's quiet, may I ask to have the question repeated, please.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

This time, I hope you will be able to hear it.
Representative Schmidle.

REP. SCHMIDLE: (106th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question to you, Representative Cohen is, if you have a community, say of 5,000 students, 500 of whom are eligible, for whom you are getting extra money because they are either AFDC or have not succeeded on the mastery test. If you're spending \$4800 on each student in that community, will you be spending additional dollars on those 500 students who need it the most, or is their allocation from this particular formula still going to be the \$4800 across the board like every other student in that community?

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I believe the answer is yes.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Representative Schmidle.

REP. SCHMIDLE: (106th)

Through you, Mr. Speaker, you're saying then that

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every student in that community, even those who need the extra help will still be just spending \$4800 on each one of those students.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Representative Cohen.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Through you, Mr. Speaker, that is not what I'm saying and that is not what I thought you asked, Representative Schmidle.

REP. SCHMIDLE: (106th)

Oh, I'm sorry.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Representative Schmidle, why don't we try one more time, for a precise question, we'll get you a precise answer and then we'll be able to move on to the other bills on our Calendar.

REP. SCHMIDLE: (106th)

Hopefully. My question to Representative Cohen is, if you have a school system that has 5,000 children and 500 of those children are being counted to get extra money for that community, they're either AFDC children or welfare students who are not scoring well on a mastery test. If the level of spending per pupil from this particular grant is \$4800, do these 500 students who need the money the most, the extra help,

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for whom the extra money is being allocated, do these students still only get \$4800 spent on them from this particular formula?

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Through you, Mr. Speaker, no. Because, in order to reach the foundation level, Representative Schmidle, it's tied to your number of need pupils. You count each pupil as one and then you add a quarter factor for AFDC and you add a quarter factor for mastery. So in effect, if you were in a community with a large number of need pupils, your foundation level would be higher than \$4800.

But what would happen to you is that the State would be paying you the same share, so you might have to spend more, but the State would be contributing more as you addressed the educational needs of those need pupils.

REP. SCHMIDLE: (106th)

Mr. Speaker, I guess this is my most serious problem with this particular formula, and also with the GTB formula. We keep cranking in extra dollars for these students, these needy students and I have no objection to getting their money. In fact, I think they should be getting twice as much, but I understand the money isn't there.

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Over the years, in the last ten years, we have not improved the lot of these students who needed the money. We're once again now, coming up with a formula in which we put all of the money for the town in this big emorphous cauldron. It steams away and nobody knows where the money goes, but I know that those students who need it, apparently are not getting that money and I'm not sure they're going to get it now.

And because I have a crystal ball and I know how the amendments are going tonight, I will not produce my amendment, Mr. Speaker, but I'm very concerned about the students that I feel really need the money the most and they are the AFDC students and they're also the students who haven't scored on the mastery test.

And until we dedicate funds strictly and absolutely and positively to their use, we're really not helping them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Will all members please be seated. Staff and guests to the well of the House. Will you remark further? Representative Ward of the 86th.

REP. WARD: (86th)

Not to call an amendment, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, obviously from the amendments I call, I thought there should be some changes in the formula.

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However, I do intend to support the formula. I think it does move in the right direction. It honors a commitment we made to follow up on enhancement and on GTB. A lot of effort did go into the formula.

I think over the next couple of years we will see some changes in the formula, but I do think that the Chamber ought to adopt a formula this evening so the districts can plan, have at least a ballpark figure of the kind of money that will go to them and I think the foundation type of formula is the right formula to get to.

In fact, I believe it was Representative Neumann that told me a decade ago, he argued for that formula in this very Chamber, as a better way to go than the GTB. I think we are moving in the right direction. It needs some improvement, but I certainly intend to support the formula.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Representative Cohen.

REP. COHEN: (15th)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think the remarks of Representative Ward reinforce the spirit which went into adopting this formula and which I believe will be reflected in the vote.

I can assure the members of the Chamber that that

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spirit goes forward from tonight, and I guess, this morning, as we continue to monitor what we are doing on behalf of Connecticut's children. I thank you all for your patience and I invite you to join me in supporting the formula.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Will all members please be seated. Staff and guests to the well of the House. Will you remark further? If not, the machine will be opened.

CLERK:

The House of Representatives is now voting by roll.

Members please report to the Chamber. The House of Representatives is taking a roll call vote. Members to the Chamber please.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted and is your vote properly recorded? If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

Will the Clerk please announce the tally.

CLERK:

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Senate Bill 539 as amended by Senate Amendments
"A", "B" and "C" in concurrence.

Total number voting	149
Necessary for passage	75
Those voting yea	139
Those voting nay	10
Those absent and not voting	2

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

The bill as amended is passed.

CLERK:

Please turn to Page 3, top of the page, Calendar
532, Substitute for House Bill 5766, AN ACT ADOPTING
THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMPENSATION COMMISSION FOR
ELECTED STATE OFFICERS AND JUDGES. Favorable Report of
the Committee on Appropriations.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

The House will come to order. Representative David
Lavine.

REP. LAVINE: (100th)

Mr. Speaker. I move the Joint Committee's
Favorable Report and passage of the bill.

SPEAKER STOLBERG:

Will you remark?

REP. LAVINE: (100th)

Mr. Speaker, the Clerk has an amendment, LCO 3665.

S-284

CONNECTICUT
GEN. ASSEMBLY
SENATE

PROCEEDINGS
1988

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2240-2587

THURSDAY
APRIL 28, 1988

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Sullivan.

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

If there is no further comment, Mr. President, I
would move this to the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

THE CLERK:

Calendar Page 4, Calendar 401, File 577, Substitute
for Senate Bill 539, AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL FINANCE.

Favorable Report of the Committee on APPROPRIATIONS.

Clerk is in possession of a number of amendments.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Kevin Sullivan.

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

Thank you. I move acceptance of the Joint
Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill
and ask that LCO 4226 be called.

THE CHAIR:

Clerk please call the amendment.

THE CLERK:

LCO 4226 designated Senate Amendment Schedule "A"
offered by Senator Sullivan of the 5th District.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Sullivan.

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

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Yes, I would request the reading of the amendment and APPROPRIATIONS to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection you may proceed.

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

Yes, thank you, Mr. President. This amendment is merely technical to clear up several problems with the file copy that it appears in front of us. There is a slight savings to the State in this bill as a consequence of certain grants to individual towns which were previously granted under the old Teacher Requisition programs to so-called Shared Services Programs and now to be disaggregated back to the towns for purposes of this bill.

THE CHAIR:

Do you wish to remark further? All those in favor of the amendment signify by saying aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed? The amendment is adopted.

THE CLERK:

LCO 4220 designated Senate Amendment Schedule "B"
offered by Senator Sullivan of the 5th District et al.

THE CHAIR:

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Senator Sullivan.

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

I move for adoption and request permission to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, you may proceed.

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

Thank you, Mr. President. The purpose of this amendment is to recognize as we move to a school finance formula which will for the first time include real and direct measures of educational student need to move to a threshold for certain school districts which have at least 20% of their students identified as student need based on a factor of 1/4 AFDC and 1/4 performance below expectation on the State's program of Mastery Testing.

THE CHAIR:

Further remarks on the amendment? All those in favor of the amendment signify by saying aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed? The amendment is adopted.

THE CLERK:

LCO 4436 designated Senate Amendment Schedule "C"

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offered by Senator Sullivan of the 5th District et al.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Sullivan.

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

Mr. President, I move adoption and request permission to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, you may proceed.

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

Thank you, Mr. President. I am pleased to join with my colleague, Senator Eads, in offering this amendment. The present school finance formula in the State of Connecticut and the proposal before us continue a bonus provision for students in regional school districts. Under the file copy and under the present GTB that bonus has previously only been available to K-12 school districts, despite the fact that we have in the State of Connecticut many middle school and secondary school regional districts.

The purpose is to provide a \$25 per student bonus on a sliding basis depending on the number of grades in the regional school district. So for the first time school districts which are less than full K-12 regional will be able to have a share of the per pupil student bonus.

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THE CHAIR:

Further remarks on the amendment? Senator Eads.

SENATOR EADS:

Thank you, Mr. President. I just want to thank Senator Sullivan. We thought this would be a very equitable situation and we had many brilliant ideas, particularly coming from Senator Reginald Smith on this regional thing and wherever the regional schools are they are going to benefit by it. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Further remarks on the amendment? All those in favor of the amendment signify by saying aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed? The amendment is adopted. Further amendments?

THE CLERK:

LCO 4298 designated Senate Amendment Schedule "D"
offered by Senator Smith of the 8th District et al.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Smith.

SENATOR SMITH:

Thank you, Mr. President. Just for clarification, this is LCO 4298?

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THE CHAIR:

Correct.

SENATOR SMITH:

Thank you. Mr. President, I would move adoption of the amendment and request permission to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered.

SENATOR SMITH:

Thank you, Mr. President. What this amendment does is basically state that if a town receives additional funds for education that town in fact must spend that money for that purpose. And in the briefest of words because I know there will probably be a number who want to speak to this issue. It basically says that no town equalization aid can increase by more than the increase in the towns commitment to education.

This amendment is based on not only my personal experience and the experience of a number of municipalities that I have talked to, at least municipalities officials that I have talked to throughout the State, but it's also based on a study that was done dealing with and components of which I extracted from an Educational Equity Study Report. And basically, part of that analysis said the reasons why the GTB formula has not reduced expenditure disparities

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as expected. That was the title of the report. But basically the content of that particular section said in many instances, although the State of Connecticut was making a commitment at the state level to fund education and was passing monies on to the communities for the purposes of providing equitable educational opportunities throughout the State, some towns were not, in fact, using the money for that designated purpose.

This amendment doesn't seek to detract from all the fine work that has gone into the education equity program and this fine bill that is before us, but what it does attempt to do is to ensure that these large expenditures that we are all being asked to put in place today, expenditures which will probably have dramatic impact on the State's tax structure, expenditures that I and several others in my caucus have made personal public commitments to support. We just want to make sure the monies that we are putting forth are not used to balance budgets, reduce taxes or for whatever other purpose local elected officials might see fit to use the money.

What we want to make sure and what this amendment does is ensure that the dollars that we put forward has to end up in the education programming in all the towns

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and cities that this money is directed to. Thank you,
Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Further remarks? Senator Kevin Sullivan.

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

Thank you, Mr. President. While I certainly share
in the concern expressed by my colleague, Senator
Smith, I would nonetheless urge rejection of the
amendment, in part because it is not needed.

Subsection C of Section 3 of the bill that is
before us already states that all aid distributed to a
town pursuant to the provisions of this section shall
be expended for school purposes only and shall be
expended upon the authorization of the local or
regional board of education. Expended for school
purposes only.

In fact, my recollection of the study that was done
even under the GTB, which obviously has its flaw or we
would not be here today discussing a bill which will
significantly help to do a better job of reducing
disparities. Experience out there in the real world
has not been that school districts are in the business
of reducing education expenditures. The fact of the
matter, I know of no school district faced with the
usual increasing cost of contract settlements,

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especially since our passage of the Enhancement Act in 1986, given the other costs that rise inevitably in the school budget, I know of no school budgets that have been cutting back on education.

Finally, to the extent that this bill provides in it, a very firm and a very clear minimum expenditure requirement. In addition to the specific language which it mandates all the funds under the act be spent on public education, school districts who may be at a low level of expenditure relative to need and relative to the State will be required to raise those expenditures further, those expenditures will be matched by new state dollars which is one of the virtues of this proposal before us.

There may be, not in terms of reducing local expenditures, but perhaps adjusting the share between state and local expenditure, there may be a few school districts in the State who will not have to increase their expenditures as dramatically as they would have, but for the aid provided under our new school finance formula. And there is a reason for that. The reason for that is that one of the underlying purposes of school finance equalization is to reduce tax disparity, school tax disparity and effort among school districts in the State of Connecticut.

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We have many school districts in this State, particularly in Northeastern Connecticut who have been making an inordinate tax effort, notwithstanding, a relatively small tax base in order to raise their level of educational spending. For those school districts there will be a small opportunity to take this state money, spend it all on education and therefore perhaps not have to increase quite as much their own local spending, but still increase it they will.

The consequence of that will be that for the first time there will be help to those school districts to relieve that tax burden that they have been bearing in so large a share than other school districts throughout the State of Connecticut. So as I said at the outset, I think the purpose and the concern that Senator Smith expresses are very real and very important, but they are also very directly and addressed in a very important way in the bill before us. And I would urge rejection of the amendment.

THE CHAIR:

Further remarks? Senator Smith.

SENATOR SMITH:

Thank you, Mr. President. When we vote on this I would request a roll call vote.

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Roll call has been requested. All those in favor of a roll call signify by saying aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Sufficient number has been attained. Roll call will be issued. Senator Smith.

SENATOR SMITH:

Mr. President, in direct response to Senator Sullivan's comments with regard to this amendment. I believe he referred to Section C in the file. I believe it starts on Line 40. It says all aid distributed to a town pursuant to the provisions of this section shall be expended for school purposes only and shall be expended upon the authorization of the local or regional board of education.

I think that's fine. But it doesn't address the problem of a town who chooses not to continue to grow in its commitment to education. It does allow, as he mentioned, to reduce the towns participation, perhaps. So in effect what we are doing is we are shifting, we are shifting monies from other parts of the budget, the board of eds budget, perhaps into other programs, because in effect, what would happen is the town could back off on its commitment and still allow the budget

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to grow as a result of the expenditures, or the revenues that have been provided through this legislation.

I don't think there is anything in this bill that makes sure that the town's commitment is also directed as well as the directed revenue stream that we are providing in the legislation before us. The amendment simply states that no towns equalization aid can increase by more than the increase in the towns education budget. And if it does, that means that the commitment that the town is making is reduced. And in effect we are providing property tax relief through an education program.

So all this amendment attempts to do is to make sure in fact what has been stated by the able Chairman of the Committee. It does in fact get translated into the law before us. I think it's a minor amendment in terms of the overall program. But it's a major amendment in terms of the commitment that we expect from the people in Connecticut and particular units of local government. A commitment that should in fact be enhanced as a result of the tremendous monetary liability that the State of Connecticut is assuming as a result of this bill. And for that reason, Mr. President, I urge adoption of the amendment.

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THE CHAIR:

Further remarks on the amendment? Clerk please make an announcement for immediate roll call.

Excuse me, Senator Robertson.

SENATOR ROBERTSON:

Thank you, Mr. President. I personally can't see a reason for opposition to the amendment. I think very simply we are saying if we are going to dramatically change the formula and more importantly dramatically change the amount of money which is being put into the formula it is for educational purposes. That's what we are debating and discussing today. It is our desire to improve the quality of education. We are under court mandate to improve the quality of education and to equalize the quality of education.

The amendment very simply says, whatever the increase is from one year to the next, the town must at least put that increased money in. Now, it certainly doesn't happen often. We would certainly hope it doesn't happen often, but I think if you were to do a little bit of research you would find that certain town officials in certain years, most specifically in the years when they are up for election, the education budget grows less and taxes will grow less or sometimes actually get reduced. And I'm certain that no mayor

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does that purposely, but we would like to see the money go to education and not be used, or the potential of it being used to the benefit of an individual.

Certainly, the most basic of research would indicate that some of the towns where the educational problem is the greatest, this practice has been followed and as long as we are going to dramatically increase the amount of money for the education of the children of our state, I see nothing wrong with us saying that fine, we want to make certain that you use this money for that purpose and therefore I would think that everyone here should be in favor of this amendment. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Further remarks on the amendment? Clerk, please make an announcement for immediate roll call.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.
Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.
Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.
Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.

THE CHAIR:

The question before the Chamber is a motion to adopt Amendment Schedule "D", LCO No. 4298. The machine is open, please record your vote. Has everyone

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voted? The machine is closed. Clerk please tally the vote.

The result of the vote.

11 Yea

24 Nay

The amendment is defeated.

THE CLERK:

LCO 4326 designated Senate Amendment Schedule "E"
offered by Senator Smith of the 8th District et al.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Smith.

SENATOR SMITH:

Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, I would move adoption of the amendment, request permission to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, you may proceed.

SENATOR SMITH:

Thank you sir. The bill before us basically addresses an issue concerning, I believe it is described by Senator Sullivan, the Senator from West Hartford, as having a component within the formula and aid that is being distributed that deals with students that perform below a standard on Mastery Testing and I applaud that. But I do not applaud and what this

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amendment addresses is an effort to make sure that dollars are set aside for improvement in Mastery Test scores, remedial programming or whatever are actual applied to specific programs within a given school district for the purposes so stated.

So simply put, the amendment basically takes approximately \$13 million, that's the component of the dollars available, out of the formula and that was the formula that included a Mastery Test component and sets aside that same amount of money, the same dollars per community and the same dollars in aggregate, but requires that each town must apply for the amount that they would otherwise receive from the basic formula and develop a program specifically dealing with a remedial program for the particular students in the category so designated.

I think this goes a far way in resolving one of the major complaints that we have heard throughout the State and throughout our own districts that we are rewarding school districts for poor performance. I think by setting this aside as a categorical grant, and on that basis the money would be distributed to various communities, first of all we would eliminate that problem, that is the attendant problem of trying to explain to people why we are rewarding school districts

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for poor performance, but we are also addressing in a positive way an effort that should be directed by the State Board of Education to ensure that good, solid remedial programming is put in place in each district on the basis of need, on the basis that was used in determining the dollars that would be distributed to each community.

I know that there are others in the caucus, Republican caucus that will want to talk to this issue and at this point I would yield to Senator Eads.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Eads.

SENATOR EADS:

Thank you. I go quite along with Senator Smith and with this amendment. I think this amendment is such that it is going to prove accountability. It has to go to the Commissioner. They have to lay plans. The plans have to be followed. The towns will get their money and I see no reason why we can't go along. We have many, many grants and things that we give. We have compensatory education grants. We have priority school grants. We have the summer school incentive aid to the drop out prevention. I see no reason why we can't put this as a categorical grant and make sure that we have accountability.

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I don't know of anyplace and perhaps Kevin Sullivan can show me where in the bill that there is any accountability except for the students who test below the median. And as Senator Smith says we are rewarding the mediocracy and I certainly do not go along with that. So I would certainly urge support. I think the public wants the accountability of the schools and their school system and their boards of education. So I would ask them to please support this amendment.

THE CHAIR:

Further remarks on the amendment? Senator Freedman.

SENATOR FREEDMAN:

Thank you, Mr. President. I would like to agree with both Senator Eads and Senator Smith on this particular amendment. I think any of us who have served on boards of education, particularly during the past 5 or 6 years when there have been numerous reports stressing the other end of the spectrum, the excellence part of the spectrum. Now, in this formula, in order to be able to distribute money on an equalization formula we are looking to testing, probably one of the few states in the Nation who will be using test scores for criteria for gaining funds.

And I had great difficulty when the formula came

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out because accountability is not built into it. We are going to give money to school systems where the test scores are now below a certain level and do we expect anything in return from those school systems? I think this amendment would make those towns and cities responsible for improving the scores or at least providing the programs necessary to bring the scores up and to assure that those children who made it possible for their towns to qualify for more money are getting the education that they need. And I think that's what this is all about. Education. If you can't perform at this level, can we at least assure that you will be remediated so that you can perform at this level and move forward and get the education that the State would like to see each child get.

I would urge everyone in this Assembly to please support the amendment. I think, if nothing else, accountability on test scores is something that we must address before we can take a look at the total package. Thank you, Mr. President. Could we have a roll call on this please?

THE CHAIR:

Roll call has been requested. All those in favor of a roll call indicate by saying aye.

SENATORS:

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Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Sufficient number has been attained. Roll call will be issued. Further remarks? Senator Kevin Sullivan.

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

Thank you, Mr. President. The bill is indeed about education. In fact that's why for the first time we have an opportunity to include in the work horse of aid to school districts, a school finance equalization program, a real measure of student need and student performance. Now, to some degree I think the debate is becoming one of perhaps semantics. When we build into the equalization formula a measure for those kids and those school districts which are identified as having a large degree of student need based on the Mastery Test program and try to drive dollars to those needs, it's rewarding mediocrity.

When we set it aside in what will now be the third, perhaps even the 4th or 5th, depending on how you count a couple of other categorical programs, the 3rd, 4th or 5th categorical program, it somehow becomes something else. I submit to you that the factor built into this formula for the first time, which is a measure of need based on performance on that test and one that not only

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drives dollars to where there is identified low performance among students, but turns back a reward over time to school districts who raise the performance of those students, something not recommended by the Department of Education, but something very clearly included by the Education Committee, because we wanted to send a message that we not only care about putting dollars where the kids' needs are, we care about also saying to school districts that you will return dollars to your school district if you improve those scores and you improve that performance.

It also troubles me that we seem to say to school districts who I happen to trust and happen to believe in and happen to believe in the decisions made by local boards of education about the priorities of their kids and their schools, that we say to them that we don't trust them, we don't trust your judgement. We don't believe we can give you these dollars. We have to somehow mandate something new. We have to somehow tie you down. That even though the Mastery Test program recognizes what you must do, we don't believe you will do it. Well, I believe school districts will do it, because they have been doing it under compensatory education. They have been doing it in response to the Mastery Testing program that is already on the books

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and that's the accountability.

One of the accountabilities is that the tests continue and the performances known and there is a requirement for remediation that has been on the books for some time in the State of Connecticut. Finally, it troubles me that we say that we would rather care about driving dollars after the fact, rather than sending them out to the school districts in time to improve opportunities for all kids. For all kids. Instead of waiting as this amendment proposes to do until the harm is done. Then we would identify the deficiencies and frankly then we end up spending twice as much money to remediate those kids as we would if we allowed the dollars to flow through the formula in the first place for the general improvement of education as well as the specific improvement for those children identified with specific needs.

I would respectfully urge rejection of the amendment.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Robertson.

SENATOR ROBERTSON:

Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, I am really quite surprised at the remarks of Senator Sullivan, because this amendment generally was doing

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what we perceive as completing a process which he is Chairman of the Committee began. When the formula initially came out and it was initially introduced to the Education Committee, it had an absolute disincentive use of the Mastery Tests. A number of us came out in opposition to that and though I don't know if Senator Sullivan was vocal, evidently his intellectual concern about the disincentive existed because he was a leader to soften that disincentive.

And I compliment him for the softening. We are just taking the softening and we are eliminating. The fact is the formula says, or the formula initially said that if you do very badly on the Mastery Test you are going to get more money. And we just felt that a disincentive in a major formula was not correct. But we agree that there are some school systems with some problems that are not necessarily the responsibility or within the ability of the classroom teachers to deal with, so we agree that there is a need to have money which can target those school systems to help them deal with their problem.

What the Education Committee did is it took a .5 multiplier and reduced it to a .25 multiplier, I believe, and there also is a softening effect of the disincentive if they improve on the number of Mastery

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Test failures. So the Education Committee has recognized that the disincentive in the formula is not correct and has softened it. This amendment eliminates it. But it establishes another grant program, same amount of money and just says, hey, if you have a problem, you have a major problem with Mastery Test failures, upon application and upon a program to solve that problem you are going to get the money anyway and I think that's wise.

It's just following what Senator Sullivan began. We are just trying to help him finish it. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Further remarks? Clerk please make an announcement for immediate roll call.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.
Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.
Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.
Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.

THE CHAIR:

Question before the Chamber is a motion to adopt Amendment Schedule "E", LCO No. 4326. The machine is open. Please record your vote. Has everyone voted? The machine is closed. Clerk please tally the vote.

The result of the vote.

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11 Yea

25 Nay

The amendment is defeated.

THE CLERK:

LCO 4506 designated Senate Amendment Schedule "F"

offered by Senator Smith of the 8th District.

THE CHAIR: (President Pro Tempore in the Chair)

Senator Smith.

SENATOR SMITH:

Thank you, Mr. President. I would move adoption of the amendment and request permission to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

You may proceed.

SENATOR SMITH:

This amendment unlike the previous amendments deals with what we call pure equity in the distribution of the dollars available to municipalities. And in the simplest form basically looks at the money that we sent out to communities for payment in lieu of taxes and then looks at the effect that that payment in lieu of taxes would have on the total Grand List of the community, the Grand List being one of the components that we look at in determining how money for educational purposes is redistributed, reallocated, if you will, to the communities. It is part of the wealth

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definitions and we think that when you receive the payment in lieu of taxes for certain tax exempt property that is not on the Grand List that an adjustment should be represented on the Grand List that is used for purposes of distributing monies for education.

If you look at the fiscal note and the impact statement therein, basically says that this amendment would redistribute funding in the bill by including the value of the pilot grants in terms of the equalized net Grand List and wealth factor in altering the guaranteed wealth level. The amendment would result in increased funding for 92 towns, no change in 59 towns and a decrease in 18 towns.

For those of you who might be interested I have a composite run that has been put together in support of this amendment and as I stated earlier, as you take a look at this and find out which towns, are what I refer to as pilot rich and which towns which are pilotless, you will find that those who are already receiving monies for their tax exempt property and the payment in lieu of taxes payment recognizes that, are also receiving another component through the education program that I don't think was ever really intended.

Once you recognize the fact that there is certain

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tax exempt property and we have the responsibility to help towns to alleviate that burden through another program they shouldn't get in effect a double hit. They get the pilot money. There is no adjustment in the Grand List when calculating the education money and therefore that's an inequity that has been created as a result of this legislation.

This amendment addresses that inequity, makes the necessary adjustments to ensure that those towns are not getting a double benefit and the net result is there is monies available to assist a number of communities throughout the State. Mr. President, I believe this is an amendment that should have been considered by the Committee. Perhaps if there are those in the Chamber who would like to take moment and look at the fiscal note, you might observe that there are a number of your communities that are net beneficiaries. You might note, for example, that Glastonbury is a net recipient. Newington is a net recipient. Guilford and North Branford are net recipients. Beacon Falls and Bethany are net recipients. Burlington, Senator Sullivan, is a net recipient under this program. Southington, Wolcott, Ledyard, Deep River, New Hartford. I just wanted to see if you were all paying attention.

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A number of towns are net recipients under this program as I stated earlier in the initial summary.

THE CHAIR:

Senator, good to see that you have not lost your sense of humor as we wind down...

SENATOR SMITH:

Thank you, Mr. President. As I noted earlier, 92 towns would receive increased funding. 59 would hold even and only 18 towns would decrease. I think, Senator, Mr. President, that this is an amendment that at least 30 Senators in this Circle should be supporting and we are hoping they do. Thank you. When we vote I would like to have a roll call.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further? Senator Sullivan. The roll call has been noted.

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

I'm glad to learn, Senator Smith, that my towns are not among those that are pilotless. I think this is an amendment whose time may not yet have come. But none the less an amendment that bears further scrutiny, not least of all because the Office of Policy and Management is at this time continuing a review and study of the workings of the various pilot programs the State of Connecticut finances. The relationship of

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those grants, the relationship of the property taken off the local tax base, which those grants reflect and the adjusted equalized net grand lists of the communities, a factor in this formula.

It is also a matter which, while I urge its rejection today, I would like to be able to take back as one of the members of this Circle who also sits on the continuing Education Equity Study Committee, which works from year to year to review various aspects of the formula and in fact was the first parent, if you will, of the bill that is before us today, to take back to that committee for further consideration and further review this idea.

With that commitment, I would nonetheless urge we reject this amendment today.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further? Senator Lovegrove.

SENATOR LOVEGROVE:

Thank you, Mr. President. Just out of curiosity, through you to Senator Smith, I would like to ask when the Town of Fairfield sits on his list?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Smith, do you care to respond?

SENATOR SMITH:

I'm sorry, Mr. President, I was momentarily

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distracted by the two wonderful council that I have and
if I could have the question repeated.

THE CHAIR:

I believe the question was the Senate had phrased
but it's out of curiosity, he was wondering where
Fairfield stood.

SENATOR SMITH:

Well, Fairfield certainly has been pilotless for
some time and I would assume they are a net beneficiary
under this program.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lovegrove.

SENATOR LOVEGROVE:

Just an assumption. How am I supposed to vote on
this amendment, Senator Smith?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Smith, do you care to respond?

SENATOR SMITH:

I have been advised Senator that you have been
neutralized on this because you are a hold harmless
community.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Lovegrove.

SENATOR LOVEGROVE:

Mr. President, this is a bad amendment. It should

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be defeated.

THE CHAIR:

It's good to see that objectivity still prevails.
Senator Freedman, did you wish to be recognized?

SENATOR FREEDMAN:

Thank you, Mr. President. I wanted to ask Senator
Smith the same question. Are any towns in the 26th
pilotless or do they have pilot?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Smith.

SENATOR SMITH:

Thank you. I think the question from the Senator
in the 26th District was how were her towns impacted by
this amendment. New Canaan makes out, the others break
even.

THE CHAIR:

Further remarks? Senator Johnston.

SENATOR JOHNSTON:

The Senate Democratic Freshmen members of this
Circle appreciate Senator Lovegrove's opposition.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Morano.

SENATOR MORANO:

Mr. President, a question through you to the
distinguished Minority Leader. Can you, Senator Smith,

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tell me how much Greenwich is increasing.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Smith do you care to respond?

SENATOR SMITH:

Yes, Senator Morano, your town has got what they deserved.

SENATOR MORANO:

You mean in terms of dollars? Or me? (Laughter)

SENATOR SMITH:

You Senator would be a credit to any District. Your communities, though, broke even.

SENATOR MORANO:

Mr. President, through you, I want to compliment with the Minority Leader. I agree with him 100%. I figure if I speak long enough on this amendment our friends on the other side of the Aisle might capitulate and agree with you.

THE CHAIR:

Further remarks? Roll call vote has been requested. Clerk please make an announcement for immediate roll call.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.
Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.
Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.

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Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.

THE CHAIR:

The item before us is Senate Amendment Schedule "F", LCO No. 4506. The machine is open, please cast your vote. Has everyone voted? The machine is closed. Clerk please tally the vote.

The result of the vote.

8 Yea

28 Nay

The amendment is defeated.

THE CLERK:

LCO 4415 designated Senate Amendment Schedule G"
offered by Senator Smith of the 8th District.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Smith. Senator Robertson.

SENATOR ROBERTSON:

Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, I would move adoption of the LCO that has been called. I would seek leave of the Chamber, sir, so that I might summarize.

THE CHAIR:

You may proceed.

SENATOR ROBERTSON:

And if I might, so I don't forget, that when a vote be taken, I would like to request that it be taken by

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roll.

THE CHAIR:

Request has been made to take a roll. It has been duly noted.

SENATOR ROBERTSON:

Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, the formula that we have developed for the purpose of properly funding education in the State of Connecticut, though every time one is created it is considered perfect, it always seems to be modified and the need for a dramatic change now. And as I and a number of my colleagues have looked at the formula we have found an area which we think legitimizes a certain amount of change.

Specifically the formula which I am talking about which establishes the state aid percentage which is developed by taking the integer of 1 and subtracting from that the fraction and the numerator of that fraction as town wealth and the denominator of that fraction, that's the bottom number, which is a guaranteed wealth level and to break it down further. When we evaluate the ratio created for town wealth which is as an numerator property wealth with income adjustment, which we feel is proper, and as the denominator, the need pupils, we feel that...we believe

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that there should be a limit to that ratio of 75.

And so therefore this amendment would redistribute the funding in the bill by limiting the aid ratios to a maximum of 75%. Now one might ask and I'm sure you are sitting at the edge of your chair to find out what...would that adjust the money that your town might receive. And in a general sense by limiting the aid ratio to a maximum of 75% there would be no change in 54 of the towns of our State.

There would also be a decrease in a few towns, 17 in number. The funding for 98 of the towns in our State would be increased and again by looking at the chart of funding, but more importantly looking at the internal integrity of the formula and its inner workings, specifically in the area of the wealth with the income adjustment and as well as the guaranteed wealth level, we believe this is an appropriate amendment.

If one might be interested in some of those towns that might be positively effected, very quickly I will indicate that Bolton, Columbia, Glastonbury, Hebron, Manchester, Berlin, Newington, Durham, Guilford, Middlefield, North Branford, Wallingford, Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Bethany, Derby, Seymour, Burlington, Southington, Groton, Ledyard, Preston, Deep River, East

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Lyme, New London, Bethel, Danbury, New Fairfield, Andover, Coventry, Tolland, Vernon, Willington, just a few that were selected at random.

Mr. President, again, there is no perfect formula. If there was a perfect formula we wouldn't have this bill before us. Certainly times change, economics change, but as we have seen since 1976, since we created the GTB formula there have been numerous years where we have made tinkering and this is the first year of a new formula, our evaluation is there are some tinkering that can be done immediately and therefore the purpose for the amendment. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further? Senator Sullivan.

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

Thank you, Mr. President. Interesting amendment that turns the Horton Decision, the Constitution and the whole purpose that brings us here today on its head. Let's take a look at the towns, those 17 that will be adversely affected by this proposal. Ashford, Brooklyn, Canterbury, Griswold, Killingly, Lisbon, Plainfield, Plymouth, Putnam, Scotland, Sterling, Thompson, Windham, among others.

A list of towns which are without question the poorest, property poorest towns in the State of

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Connecticut. A list of towns which without question are already making among the highest local tax efforts in the State of Connecticut. It's an enticing amendment. It's the reverse Robin Hood amendment. Steal from the poor, give to the rich. Give to some of my towns, marginally. Fortunately the formula does as well, but what it does is take the fundamental reason why we are even here debating this bill today and throws it out the window and I'm afraid with it the purpose of equity, the purpose of equalization. I would urge rejection.

THE CHAIR:

Further remarks? Clerk please make an announcement for immediate roll call.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.
Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.
Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.
Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.

THE CHAIR:

The item before us is Senate Amendment Schedule "G", LCO No. 4415. The machine is open, please cast your vote. Has everyone voted? The machine is closed. Clerk please tally the vote.

The result of the vote.

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9 Yea

27 Nay

The amendment is defeated.

THE CLERK:

Mr. President, it is my understanding that the remaining amendments are to be withdrawn.

THE CHAIR: (The President is in the Chair)

We are now on the bill as amended. Senator Kevin Sullivan.

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

Thank you, Mr. President. I am very pleased that the debate, so far, on the most important education bill to come before the Legislature this year has been, I think one of the most high minded that we have had in my first two years here.

Today we take a very important next step in the continuing commitment in educational equity and excellence in Connecticut. A commitment begun back in 1975 by Democratic Legislature which mindful of the Horton Decision began the process of equalizing school finance in Connecticut. A commitment and important new assumption of State cost, carried forward in 1986 by Republican State Legislature with its enactment of the Enhancement Act.

The results under both of those programs have been

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good, but not good enough. We have seen some narrowing of disparities. We have certainly seen improvement in student performance. We have certainly seen enhancement in recruitment and retention of teachers and a significant growth in the State share of education cost, finally bringing us in Connecticut within the National range.

Nonetheless, disparities and very wide disparities exist in the State of Connecticut. Maybe three factors will be interesting. Per pupil tax resources in the State of Connecticut. The disparity from highest to lowest town, 35 to 1. School tax rates in the State of Connecticut, the highest to lowest town, 9 to 1. Per pupil expenditures, a disparity from highest to lowest of 2 to 1 in the State of Connecticut.

The result, despite progress, despite the good efforts and the good investments, significant efforts made by Legislatures past has been that we are none the less facing a situation where too many school districts with too few resources cannot possibly provide equal opportunity. The equal opportunity for education which our Constitution mandates.

We face a second problem and the second problem is that the promise made in 1986, the very wise promise of the Education Enhancement Act was a promise good for

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only 3 years. And the 3 years are about up. Unless we act today on this new formula and this new commitment, we have begun a process of raising educational costs for every school district in the State of Connecticut, that unless we leave something in place this year, we will leave every one of those school districts to foot the bill.

So the question really before us is whether a promise made will be a promise kept. Go back to some remarks that my colleague, Senator Robertson, made in 1986, and I think they are pertinent today when debating the Enhancement Act. He said we are now beginning a path establishing a level of priority so that we can continue. Today, that's what this legislation does. It continues us on that path. It continues and honors the commitment that we have made.

There are many respects in which this bill, the program that will put on the books is very similar to the guaranteed tax base program that we have had. But there are also many significant changes which will move us further along in that goal of equalizing educational opportunity.

First and foremost, the word commitment again. This bill honors our commitment to every school district. Because of the base aid formula which begins

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every school district at at least what it is receiving in the fiscal year 1989 plus 1%. No school district will receive less dollars, all school districts will receive more dollars. There is also a formula unlike the GTB which tended forever to chase the top end of the scale. We will begin at last to equalize up because of the foundation that is in this formula to equalize up those school districts with the greatest need for equalization aid.

We have already talked about the minimum expenditure requirement. A very important aspect of this bill which is part of that assurance we talked about earlier, that the dollars directed to the neediest school districts, those with the least resources, must be spent to enhance, increase educational spending and opportunity. But also that we will provide new state aid to those same communities in the same proportions that we require them to raise their commitment to public education.

There are also those who have criticized the GTB because as an education formula it has not truly reflected the educational tax resources, the school tax resources, if you will, of communities. This formula carries us a step forward in that respect as well and we move forward now in a way that is going to do much

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more to reduce educational disparity in basing the formula on a wealth per pupil measure.

That was an issue of some dispute when the Equity Committee reported as well as in the Education Committee. A matter that I initially had some concerns about. However, there is also built into this formula, thanks to the work of the Education Committee and the support of the Appropriations Committee and today this Legislature, a factor for education enhancement aid. That for those school districts, not the 1%'ers, but for those school districts who are clearly older suburbs, larger suburbs, smaller cities, who have significant demands on their resources in addition to education, an assurance that they will not only get the base aid, they will get base aid plus 5% more for every year of the implementation of this formula and thereafter.

So there is a recognition, a continued recognition of the extra demands and the extra costs and the extra burdens in those communities. We have already talked about the Mastery Testing factor. A factor which for the first time will put student performance, school performance, both in terms of absolute need and the success of school districts in meeting that need into our equalization aid program.

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We also have a formula because of the foundation, because of the fact that we will be spreading increases in the Grand List, averaging them if you will, over a 3 year period, instead of picking a single point in time and thereby cushioning those communities where rising property values distort the wealth of that community. We will come to a formula that avoids one of the most significant complaints that I have heard about the old GTB and that's the GTB rollercoaster. A formula that you never knew from year to year what it is you could count on and indeed what you could budget for and plan for.

And finally, this formula improves on what we have done because it will put out the state dollars for the first time, equal to what we expect to be the cost and needs that every school district is absorbing and will place Connecticut's share of public education costs clearly, clearly within the National average for the first time. This is our top priority in education. It is also the top priority of every school district in the State this year and frankly it is the top priority of every taxpayer in the State this year.

The question before us is not what will the cost of this formula be. The question, quite frankly, is who is going to pay for them? We have, through GTB, and

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significantly through the Enhancement Act of 1986, raised the price of public education because that's what needed to be done in the State of Connecticut. Now the question we are answering today is that that cost will not be simply left to the local taxpayers to pay, but we the State of Connecticut will continue our commitment to share in our Constitutional responsibility and to share in our fiscal responsibility to honor those obligations to the students and the taxpayers of the State of Connecticut.

I submit to you today that this bill gives a clear answer. That promises made are indeed promises kept.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Thomas Sullivan, followed by Senator Robertson.

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

Mr. President, I rise to support my namesake, Senator Sullivan and commend him in the Education Committee, this marvelous work that they have embarked upon and the establishment of a second wave of an educational commitment here in the State of Connecticut. This bill deserves the full support of this Chamber and I would be surprised if it doesn't receive it.

Not only does it establish the fact that the

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Legislative Body in this State endorses a massive effort toward improvement of our educational process and our educational production. Not only does it say that we will compete on a National scale with other states and our students will compete equally if not better, but it establishes the primacy of education which must be established, not only in Connecticut, but in this entire Nation.

Our children not only compete with those in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, California, but as we wonder throughout looking at the Manufacturing Task Force and understanding the elements of International competition, we must begin to prepare a generation of students who will compete against the children of Osaka, Singapore, Kowala Lampur, Seoul and Tokyo and I think we are making an immense step toward producing a new generation of students who will do us proud and I urge total support of this bill.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Robertson.

SENATOR ROBERTSON:

Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, I like the emphasis on the word Osaka. If I might, I would prefer to ask the questions on the bill of Senator Kevin Sullivan before he closed his remarks, but if you

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wouldn't mind there are a number of questions that I would like to ask.

As I understand in the bill, the foundation per pupil cost is established, I think, for fiscal year 93, \$4800 and I am curious as to how the \$4800 was developed. If there is a magic to that? Through you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Sullivan.

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

I suppose the good news is it doesn't require me to explain as we used to under the old GTB about two standard deviations above the whatever it was we used to have in that formula. The Equity Committee which made the initial recommendations that have been carried forward after surveying the range of expenditures, and let me offer just a parenthetical before direct answer.

The parenthetical is that the \$4800 is a very special \$4800. It is not inclusive of a variety of costs that school districts spend and the State helps to reimburse, such as transportation and special education. So lest anyone misconstrue what \$4800 represents, it is regular education costs of the town at twice the median state level. Is there magic? The magic seemed to be in terms of the goal of

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equalization, in terms of a realistic minimum regular program goal for the 4th year where the State ought to be heading.

That's not necessarily magic, but I think it is a realistic level for the education program.

SENATOR ROBERTSON:

Mr. President, what I gained from the response from Senator Sullivan is that people believe \$4800 of actual educational cost, excluding transportation and special education. It is a figure that is believed to be proper, but there is no magic, so one could argue for \$4700 or \$5800 and probably have the same sort of argument.

I am curious as to whether, because I have not been able to get one and maybe Senator Sullivan has been able to, I'm curious as to whether a per pupil cost by town exists based on the figures which now that \$4800 foundational level would be equated to. I have asked Fiscal Analysis, I believe our staff has asked Fiscal Analysis that for months and we have been unable to receive from them what a per pupil cost is in Cheshire or in New Hartford or any other town in the State with the Special Education and Transportation monies taken out and I'm just curious, through you, Mr. President, whether Senator Sullivan could enlighten us as to one,

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if it exists, possibly he could tell us what some of those per pupil costs are presently.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Sullivan.

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

Thank you, Mr. President. My recollection serves me and it's not with me today. I would be more than happy to go back to the rather large binder that now contains the papers of the Equity Study Committee and find the documents. We did look at the present per pupil expenditures around the State, knowing that the \$4800 figure reflected that level that I indicated we said, plus the expectation of a minimum rate of growth of 7% per year in expenditures over the 4 year phase in.

I have indeed seen an analysis of the regular per pupil cost as defined in the formula on a town by town basis. I do not have that with me today. I certainly would be happy to provide that to the Senator.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Robertson.

SENATOR ROBERTSON:

Thanks Senator Sullivan. I don't understand why we had an inability to get that list if it existed, but I would appreciate it if Senator Sullivan could make that

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available to us.

If a town is at a 7% level...I understand that basically the bill requires that by the target year of fiscal 1993 that each town must achieve the \$4800. Not having seen those figures for current year could the Senator enlighten us as to is he certain that at that 7% maximum required growth to the town that every town within the State can achieve the \$4800 without being penalized.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Sullivan, do you care to respond?

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

The question goes to the relationship of not only what we call the foundation level, but the minimum expenditure requirement, one in fact the same by the 4th year of the expenditure requirement which is mandatory will also be \$4800 per pupil. The information I have seen, particularly based on what I think is a very conservative estimate of the inflation of school spending at 7%, don't know too many contracts coming in for teachers these days at 7% that being the largest factor in the school district costs. The numbers I have seen indicate that there should be no school district with the resources additionally being provided under this formula on the phased in basis

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which cannot meet its MER foundation by the 4th year
and indeed each of the years of the formula.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Robertson.

SENATOR ROBERTSON:

Thank you, Mr. President. Again, through you, if
Senator Sullivan would be willing to respond. Is there
a penalty to a town that does not maintain or achieve
the \$4800 by the target year of fiscal 92-93?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Sullivan, do you care to respond?

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

There is a penalty under the formula, which if a
school district does not in any year meet its MER,
there is a forfeiture, if you will, of its state aid.
I am obviously shuffling the act in order to find the
section. The penalty would be a future forfeiture of
two times that amount by which that school district
fell short, fell short of its MER requirements.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Robertson.

SENATOR ROBERTSON:

Through you, there is a negative incentive if a
town doesn't maintain the projected levels of the
foundation. Mr. President, through you sir, if I

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might, and again if Senator Sullivan would be so kind to respond. How does that affect, is there an appeal process, because I am thinking of a town that for some reason might have a dramatic explosion of school age children? Is there a way to not penalize if a circumstance which we cannot anticipate at this moment were to occur?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Sullivan, do you care to respond?

SENATOR SULLIVAN:

The section, Subsection "e", I believe in Section 4 does provide that alternative remedy by way of agreement between the school district and the State of Connecticut, order to avoid, if you will, its forfeiture for its past failure, in terms of committee additional future costs and I think that within the context of that agreement, while there is no alternative MER the way there used to be under the old GTB, and the way we avoided having school districts spend their, many school districts spend their dollars for education, that would allow that kind of review.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Robertson.

SENATOR ROBERTSON:

Again, Mr. President, I would like to thank Senator

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Sullivan for his responses. As Senator Sullivan closed his remarks and had quoted me, he indicated that this was the future of education and I certainly wouldn't necessarily disagree. If it were up to me as an individual I would like to see us spend some more money on education, because there is probably nothing more important than the education of our young and as I sat here I listed a few items as to areas that at the top of my head came to mind as areas where I would like to see substantial increase spending.

And besides education I have CONNPACE program which I think all of us hold very dear to our hearts and I would like to see that expanded, even substantially expanded. I believe probably one of the most wonderful programs the state created is the Circuit Breaker Program, whether it be the freeze or on properties or on rentals and I would like to see that also increased dramatically.

Something which we don't hear a lot of debate on and I am always concerned that we don't hear debate on that, but to be perfectly honest those people unfortunately find themselves in a position to collect AFDC or any type of welfare payments. I think any evaluation would indicate that the levels of payment are so substantially below the cost of living increases

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from probably the early 70's. One of my priorities would be to see us dramatically increase the level of welfare payments for those people who unfortunately find themselves in a situation to be needing of them.

I have also agreed with a number of my colleagues in years past that pilot programs should be dramatically increased, specifically not for the Town of Cheshire because it has a prison, but certainly the burden of society that the Towns and Cities of Hartford, Bridgeport and most importantly New Haven carry and the facilities that they must maintain, tax free, within their towns to provide those people from the surrounding areas of service, needed service.

Certainly this year we have a crisis about nursing and nurses salaries, I certainly would have seen us adopt the bill yesterday. The ultimate bill would have, I think cost us \$21.1 million which would have allowed nursing homes so that they could attract competent nurses, increase nurses salaries and use it as an exact calculator in their Medicaid rates. We did not find fit to do that. And why don't we just go and increase the funding for these programs? Because I believe we all agree that we would like to do more.

And the reason why we don't is because we understand we have a limit to what we can do. We have

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to control our hearts and control our minds because we also understand that we can't just raise taxes totally out of sight. To do that would be negative to the economy of the state. Whether it be increase a tax on capital gains, dividends, interest, corporation or sales tax, all increases in taxes have a negative, economic effect.

And that's why we don't go out and increase spending dramatically. I believe we should increase funding in education. But I look at the other side of the ledger. A budget which passed a couple of weeks ago had a number of questionable factors in it which could have a dramatically negative effect on the state and its economy. Whether it would be the revenue estimates or the level of increased spending. But even more importantly with some of the one shot gimmicks to balance the budget and I am not going to bore you with the specifics. But to talk about this bill before us.

This bill has no fiscal impact today. It has no fiscal impact on the 1988 budget and it has no fiscal impact on the 1989 budget, which is the budget which we passed. So it's easy to pass this bill, because we don't have to pay for it. We don't have to pay for it until the budget which we must adopt next year. And I guess my vote will indicate at the appropriate time

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that I believe that that is something we should be concerned with, though I believe we should adequately fund education.

The cost of this bill in its first year as estimated in its fiscal note and that would be fiscal year 89-90 is \$839,761,767.00. That represents an increase over the amount of money in the budget we adopted of some \$80 million, I have the figure somewhere. It's \$80,835,906.00. And that's all not that bad. But remember how we put together this year's education budget. We have \$166,800,000 in there from the Enhancement Fund. One shot money. Money that doesn't exist for next year. So by the passage of this bill we automatically put a hold in the budget which we will have to adopt next year, immediately upon voting yes on this bill we have a hole, a deficiency, a deficit and \$247,635,906.00. That's a lot of money. And so I ask myself and it will be a rhetorical question, anybody who wishes to address it might. But what tax will we have to increase on this one vote alone?

THE CHAIR:

Senator, we are not really discussing the budget all over again. Please confine yourself to the subject matter and I think we can complete the issue. You may

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proceed.

SENATOR ROBERTSON:

Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, again, I will be brief at this point, because I am almost finished. The fact is that we are voting on a bill which does have a fiscal impact and I'm concerned as to whether we can afford this bill today. And I ask myself will we have to raise the sales tax by a percent? Will we have to double the present dividends, interest and capital gains tax? Will we have to add to the corporations and the employers of our state by adding 62.5% to their tax? And the simple question is, I don't know. And I guess my urging is that we proceed with caution and passage of this bill as it is presently written, though a worthwhile bill with a purpose that is of highest integrity, the simple fact is can we afford it. And I don't believe we can.

THE CHAIR:

Further remarks? Senator Meotti.

SENATOR MEOTTI:

Thank you, Mr. President. At the start of this session I sent out to the thousands of families that live in the 4th Senatorial District, a questionnaire, and in that questionnaire I asked them to engage in some priority settings. I think that's the essence of

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what government decision making is all about. And in addition to some legislative public policy issues, I asked them to address budgetary issues and gave them a long laundry list of important state programs which we invest a lot of money in, a significant portion of our state budget in. And one of those, of course, was the local public schools.

And I got back over 1300 responses to this questionnaire, I think an amazing degree of response in a District which hadn't seen a questionnaire like this for quite some time. And I found that the number one issue in every single town in terms of these budget matters which addressed everything from roads and health services and all the rest, was our local public schools. And I think that is because the American public and the people of Connecticut are aware of the importance and significance of education, not only to young people, but also to the future of the United States, the future of Connecticut, the future of our region and individual communities.

The bill before us today makes fair changes, needed changes and appropriate changes in the state's commitment to public education. And I think it is something that over the next few years will serve us well and advance that commitment to free local, public

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education which is the greatest mixing factor, the greatest contributor to a democracy in the United States over the last 200 years and will continue in the future. And I want to comment the leadership of the Education Committee and the members of the Committee, particularly Senator Sullivan for an excellent job that is done from the Study Committee on into the Education Committee and today on the floor in bringing this before us.

THE CHAIR:

Further remarks? Well, we have three ladies who got up at the same time. Senator Herbst.

SENATOR HERBST:

Thank you, Mr. President. I am hearing a great deal about cost of education. I wish I had some figures that I could present to you that tells you what happens if you don't have a good educational system. And where the cost will occur. But I think if you talk to the Commissioner of the Department of Corrections and to the Commissioner of the Department of Income Maintenance, you talk to some of our other agencies you will be coming to understand that if we do not educate our young and educate them properly you will be spending more money and it may be in areas that you do not wish to spend it.

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I commend the Co-Chairman of the Education Committee as well as former Representative Mike Helthcote for seizing an issue, for taking an issue and attempting to solve it before a crisis occurred. The crisis would have occurred when the Education Enhancement Act was over. Boards of education presently need to have a commitment from the State of Connecticut in terms of education if they are going to take a look at their costs with negotiation and other programs that they are debating now for this fiscal year.

Further, I think this bill says something else which I think is very important and that is that the state is willing to commit to that responsibility and to accept it and continue it. I would like to recall to some of you that the Education Enhancement Act was funded at a surplus and not a revenue item in the budget and that scared a lot of towns and I think that fear has got to be put aside and this bill will do it.

I also think that what this bill does, it is a program of action. And it does so before the crisis comes upon us and how often we in government sometimes react to a crisis, instead of trying to prevent that crisis from occurring. I support this bill as a member of the Education Committee. I saw the work and the

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time and the effort and a number of formulas that we looked at before we arrived at this bill and the compromises that it encompasses. I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill. It's a step in the right direction. It's a step that will allow us to continue. As so many of us have already say today, a promise that you made in 1986, a promise that was made in 1975 and that promise was to the young people of the State and that is we promise you equal access, equal opportunity so that no matter your race, your color, your creed, no matter whether you live in the largest city in the State of Connecticut or the smallest town in the State of Connecticut, you shall have the finest teachers in front of you and you shall be presented the finest programs and you shall be able to say, I too am an equal in Connecticut.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Eads, followed by Senator Freedman.

SENATOR EADS:

Thank you. I'm glad I tore up my 10 page speech. I shall be very brief. This is a good bill. Not perfect, although, you have to admit a couple of us on the other side of the Aisle tried to make it a little bit better, but nothing really is perfect. I was around when they gave birth to the GTB. I'm certainly

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glad we are changing the initials now to the Education Cost Sharing so we will have something else to attract.

I know it's going to do good. There are several parts of the bill that I do not care for, but then there are lots of things in life we don't care for. I think this is a tremendous step. I don't think it's a little step, I think it's a large step. And I'm very grateful to the Co-Chairs of the Education Committee because they are the two, even though I serve on that Committee, that put all their effort and all their time and everything they could into it and I think you have done a pretty good job. I thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Freedman.

SENATOR FREEDMAN:

Thank you, Mr. President. Unfortunately, I cannot support this bill. I listened to Senator Meotti. I listened to Senator Robertson. I listened to some of my other colleagues on the floor. I think Senator Meotti hit the nail on the head when he talked about local communities. I do believe the local community is the first place of responsibility for providing education and it is their responsibility to determine what that education will be and how that education will be funded.

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I believe some of our communities have become remiss in making that a top priority and that has led us into the situation which we are trying and you are trying to remedy today. I don't believe there is probably anybody in this room who is as dedicated to education as I have been all these years. Being a teacher, being a board member, being a parent. I don't believe anyone in this room does not believe that a quality of education should not exist, that should be the standard and that everyone should have the advantage of an equal education and the opportunity.

But then I have to look at the other side of the coin. Where does this formula take us? We are supposed to be responsible citizens in this Assembly representing communities from all over the State. And I believe that there are those out there who will feel that the passage of this bill and the amount of money that we are dedicating down the road without being able to guarantee that the money exists somewhere in this State is very irresponsible on our part. And I cannot, for one, accept that irresponsibility.

I think the work that has been done by the Committee and by the committee that studied equity certainly deserves a reward and an award. And yet, I think we have gone one step too far. We must concern

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the balance of the scale in terms of what other things the State is providing. Yesterday we had a big bill on the agenda. We spend 3 hours discussing tax relief to the communities. In essence this is our second tax relief bill of the year. And I guess the one thing that truly bothers me is that there really is no guarantee from all that has been written and studied, that money is the formula that is going to make education succeed.

I think we did pass a bill yesterday worthy of this Body's enhancing education and that was the Family Resource Center. I think that by providing that type of program we are encouraging families to place a value on education and to want their children to get the best education, but that it comes from the family and what the family and the family values are that are transferred to those children.

I'm sorry I cannot vote for this and I certainly hope that you will in your consciences right now try and balance the scales of justice. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Further remarks? Senator Blumenthal.

SENATOR BLUMENTHAL:

Thank you, Mr. President. The word high minded is the one that Senator Sullivan used at one point in this

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debate to describe the debate itself, but it is an equally apt term to describe what he has done on this bill. I have watched personally with working with him, formulating Senate Amendment "B" and I have seen the intense powerful pressures that have come to bear on him in a subject matter that inevitably arouses the highest emotions and the most intense scrutiny. And he and the Education Committee have really done a terrific job in a very difficult area at a very difficult time.

I come from a community that might have wished for a different formula, that might have wished for more. Senate Amendment "B" makes this fair to my community. But I know also that my community has to look at this education system, not just in terms of its own interest, narrowly and for the moment, but in the long run as to what will happen if children in one town, not necessarily even a neighbor, but around the State are not educated properly. An education system has to be viewed and evaluated statewide because the children who go to school in one town will go to live at some point in another and will become employees there and residents there and the quality of life in that town will be effected by the quality of education system in towns all around the state.

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I think this is a big step as Senator Eads has said. It probably is not our final step in this area, certainly not our final step, but it is a big step and a good step. Thank you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Further remarks? Senator Johnston.

SENATOR JOHNSTON:

Thank you, Mr. President. Very briefly, I too would like to commend Senator Sullivan. I served on the Equity Committee with him last year trying to prepare this formula. I have to tell you that I don't totally understand it to the degree that many people do and Kevin has a really good handle on it. And I think that he had especially a lot of pressure because of the district that he came from, that he comes from and the people that he represents and there was a lot of pressures on him. And I think that he really looked at the state as a whole and where the needs were and I think those needs are addressed in this bill.

The bill directs funds to, and we discussed yesterday property tax relief and I am not going to over Eastern Connecticut again, but I think this bill directs funds to those towns that need it. To our urban centers and to the poor, smaller towns throughout Connecticut and education, in my opinion, is the key to

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those people to help themselves, to better themselves so that we can have better communities and less poverty around the State of Connecticut in this the wealthiest state.

So I really think that this is a tremendous improvement and a commitment on the part of the State of Connecticut to our young people and their futures and I clearly support it.

THE CHAIR:

Further remarks? Senator Hampton.

SENATOR HAMPTON:

Thank you, Mr. President. I too served on the Equity Committee with the two senators. I believe that this is a step in the right direction. Even though I voted for the amendments that were presented, I believe they would have enhanced the program, but now that we are on the bill itself, I believe that the education of our youngsters overrides all of the other discussions and I would urge support.

THE CHAIR:

Further remarks? Senator Smith.

SENATOR SMITH:

Thank you, Mr. President. I believe earlier there were comments about commitments met, promises made and we made those commitments and promises in 1986 and I

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was happy to be part of the Majority Party at that time when we made that commitment. I also made a public commitment to continue supporting education enhancement and in particular education funding. And although I had some differences of opinion as to the final content of the bill that Senator Sullivan has brought to us today and we did make some attempts to make some correction as Senator Hampton has noted.

But be that, as usual, we were unable to accomplish all of our objectives as the Minority Party, there is no way and in no way is it going to dissuade me in making a proud public endorsement of this program. And I think it's one that despite Senator Freedman's comments, it's one that every one of us should reflect upon. But I also at the same time send up a warning and that warning is that the fiscal capacity of the State will be strained with this bill and we all know that and that's certainly a future consideration.

But the real warning is that the ball is now in the court of the educators of the State of Connecticut and they better produce, because we are asking the taxpayers to take a very large bite and I would hope that the teaching profession, our local boards of education, education commissioner at the State level recognize that many of us have basically laid the

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taxpayer on the line with this program and we are hoping that they produce. Thank you, Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

There is opposition. The roll call is in order. Further remarks? Clerk please make an announcement for immediate roll call.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber. Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.

THE CHAIR:

Question before the Chamber is a motion to adopt Calendar 401, Substitute for Senate Bill 539, File No. 577 as amended by Senate "A", "B" and "C". The machine is open, please record your vote. Has everyone voted? The machine is closed. Clerk please tally the vote.

The result of the vote.

32 Yea

4 Nay

The bill is adopted. Call the next item please.

THE CLERK:

Calendar Page 7, Calendar 466, Files 372 and 689, Substitute for House Bill 5981, AN ACT CONCERNING ORDERS ISSUED BECAUSE OF PESTICIDE CONTAMINATION OF

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Equity Committee.

First, I want to reference three or four bills that I will not really add any detailed discussion on, but would like to support.

House Bill 6123 teacher certification. We definitely support the changes that will be before you. We've been involved for a long period of time in very productive discussions with appropriate individuals, and we fully support that legislation and hopefully you will see that through to fruition.

House Bill 6089, that is regarding making revisions to the various education laws, these represent minor revisions and we support all.

And Senate Bill 522 that deals with eliminating obsolete unnecessary provisions of the education laws and again, we've been working cooperatively with you and we would hope you move on all of those.

I keep my remarks very brief on those bills because in particular, I want to direct my remarks to Senate Bill 539, AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL FINANCE. I really want to discuss two major points with you in the time allotted, why a new formula is needed and why the General Assembly should act now.

As to why a new formula is needed, of course, we understand that the fiscal goal remains the same. We want to insure greater fiscal equity across the State for the students in our schools. Of course the State is responsible for insuring equal educational opportunity and the court decisions and other discussions in the past and the work of the Equity Committee, the goal is always to insure that funding programs strive to insure that all children have access to high quality programs, regardless of the relative wealth of the town in which they reside.

The second major point as to why it is needed, we must reduce spending disparities. And over the past eight years, the GTB has held constant, the per pupil spending gap between wealthy and poor towns. However, and this is very important, our

lowest spending towns remain below the MER established in 1979 and wealthy towns continue to spend more than twice what poor towns spend on a per pupil basis.

My sense, my feeling has been that without GTB we would have even greater disparity, so I'm not putting GTB aside. But the time has come to go beyond GTB and to insure that the poorest towns in our State can meet at least minimal spending levels and reduce the disparity gap.

In that context, and this may sound like a contradiction, I'd like to spend a moment on it, I personally would oppose, the Department would oppose House Bill 5993, which asks for a cap on educational spending in certain towns. My sense has always been if a local community wants to spend money on education, it should have the right to do that.

And in fairness, the ultimate goal of equity while it is to reduce disparity, really is to raise the poorest towns to a level sufficient to insure they have the dollars to promote a program of high quality education. And I really think it would be a mistake to cap.

A third point as to why towns in the State need greater grant stability to enhance budgeting for public education. One negative aspect of the GTB program is the volatility of the grant amounts fluctuating from year to year, keeping in mind we're making decisions based on the effort of local communities three years earlier, and of course, this has caused a great deal of misunderstanding and fluctuation of the grants.

We feel the new program would provide towns in the State with reliable grant expectations over extended periods of time.

The fourth major point, and very important, the teacher salary program under the Educational Enhancement Act now needs to be incorporated. We all made a significant commitment and promise three years ago. The time has come to fulfill that commitment and this new formula does in fact fold in the Educational Enhancement Act.

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Very briefly, why you should act now. And I know there are some people out there who would hope this could be held off for a year. But we feel very strongly this would be a very, very serious mistake for several reasons. One, this is the last year, 88-89 is the last year of the teacher's salary program under EEA. Next fall, more than 120 school districts will be negotiating new teacher contracts to go into effect in 89-90.

Under State statutes, these negotiations must be completed before the 89 Session of the General Assembly adjourns. Unless you take action, it is going to be very difficult for local school districts, boards of education and municipalities, to talk about teacher contracts unless they have a good sense as to what the level of funding would be.

Going beyond teacher negotiations, keep in mind local boards of education, superintendents plan and develop budgets for submission to municipalities early. January and February, generally, are important deadlines. I think it's going to wreak havoc on those districts if they really don't have a sense as to how much money is going to be available. So really, I cannot imagine how this decision could in any way be delayed.

Another important point and I'll end on this note. We need legislative action this year to provide the State Department of Education with the time necessary to insure the orderly implementation of a new school finance formula beginning July 1, 1989. Should you wait until the following Session, I mean, in fairness, that would only give the department one or two months to implement a major change. That would be very difficult, if not impossible.

Also, I need to remind you that if you wait until the 1989 Session, we will have only one month to implement the total program as I said, and also two of the three grant payments would be made before the Session began, I'm sorry, two of the three grant payments would be made before the 1990 Session of the General Assembly convenes to correct any technical problems encountered during

implementation.

The point I'm trying to make, we need to cause local municipalities, boards of education, superintendents, to have a good fix, or a good understanding as to the level of funding, and the State Department of Education absolutely needs the time to implement this. To hold this off for a year really would be a major disservice and extremely unfair.

A lot of time and effort has gone into drafting a new formula, and those who will make statements after me I think will bring into clear focus some of those specific changes and the goal and purpose.

I'm going to conclude there, and I want to note to the Committee, unfortunately, I'm going to have to leave relatively soon. I have a very important with another legislative committee that is dealing with another substantial issue, so I'll stop there unless you have questions. Thank you.

SEN. SULLIVAN: If there are others who want to speak from the board and the Equity Committee, perhaps it's better to have all of the statements, and then we'll see if there are questions on any of the remarks. Dorothy.

DOROTHY GOODWIN: Thank you. It's always a pleasure to be here. I thank you very much for letting me talk. I'd like to start by saying, very clearly, for the record, that I support the changes in the formula we're discussing today.

There have been some people who thought that my ego was so tied up in the old GTB, but I want to assure you that that is so. And I think the (inaudible) of my message is going to be why that is not so.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Dorothy, there are some people who thought the G actually stood for Goodwin.

DOROTHY GOODWIN: I'd like to point out that for one thing that the formula isn't all that different when you come right down to it. It uses in slightly modified form, virtually all of the same variables and again, with rather modest changes in many of the same ways.

But it does at least one major thing that the old formula did not do, or did not do effectively, or even did perversely, that I think this formula corrects for, and that is the way in which the two formulas compare as they focus on the goal at hand, (inaudible) equalization.

If you took the old formula, you had two variables in it that had real impact, depending on how people behaved and how the formula operated to equalize. One was the effort (inaudible) which assume a reaction by the towns that they would spend more on education because they got rewarded for spending it. That one as you know, becomes ineffective when you realize that the mayor's term is three years, not two years, and we were dealing with, two years not three years, and we were dealing with three year old data, so that the mayor never felt himself bound by what had happened in the decision made three years previously.

The other had to do with the MER, which as you know, was sort of tacked on some time, several years after the formula had been in place for a while, simply because it was necessary to introduce a foundation element and we have now taken the MER and made it an integral part of the formula and are going to use it as a precise directive tool.

The other major difference between the old formula and this, I think is, the fact that we now have two variables in this formula which go from a reactive position where they just sort of sat in the formula and did what the numbers told them to do, to, I hate the word proactive, but it does fit, a proactive use of two variables, the foundation and the guaranteed wealth level, which gives you something to steer with. We never had that before.

And I think if, with these two tools, the two variables that can be manipulated within the law or however we decide we wanted to handle the process of manipulation, we can target a level of equalization, and I think we have some chance, actually of achieving it.

HB 5993

Like the Commissioner, I also oppose the capping which would be the easiest way, of course, to speed

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up the equalization process and would be very easy if you capped, but it takes away the pull in the direction we want to go and I think we need that pull. I think we need to have something pulling us into the future at a level where we want to be, instead of deliberately removing that opportunity.

So, I (inaudible) support the cap, I do support the formula, and I think the formula is stronger than what we have because its control remains in our hands. Thank you.

REP. WYMAN: Thank you. Rita.

RITA HENDEL: Thank you for the opportunity to come here and speak to you about the new formula, and I want to specifically talk about the foundation and where Dorothy talked more to the similarities, I would like to address some of the differences that the new foundation represents, and I think, improvements over the MER.

First of all, the new aid formula allows for comparable tax rates spent by all communities to achieve the foundation. The State grant will pick up the difference, and I think that's a very important difference. Whereas the poorest towns were taxing themselves at the highest rate to achieve an MER, now all towns will be funding, not all towns, all towns within the guaranteed wealth level, will be funding at a comparable tax rate. I think that's an essentially, one of the most important differences.

Secondly, I think that the foundation addresses itself and tries to target those areas and students most in need financially and educationally. The Department is able to generate statistics that indicate where the needs are the greatest. So the new foundation levels up the bottom (inaudible) of students and those are the ones who are in greatest need.

Thirdly, I think that the new foundation addresses the regular program, which I think highlights what we consider an equal educational opportunity. The new foundation represents only the regular program. One of the graphs that I've submitted shows how the regular program, up until now the MER you were

permitted to include special education expenditures, State categorical and federal grant expenditures to meet your MER. Now that won't be possible. We're saying everyone should have an equal chance at the regular program, at a minimum regular program.

The other thing I would like to highlight is that the supplementals are exactly what they were intended to be, in addition to not instead of. For example, until now, we had an alternate MER. We're not going to permit that anymore. We're saying that with equalized tax rates, everyone can have, can meet their minimum expenditure.

Up until now, we have statistics for 86-87, a town like Canterbury could spend \$2,569 to meet their MER. In 92-93, we're saying they'll be able to spend \$4,800 at a minimum. Towns like Bridgeport, Voluntown and Griswold that couldn't meet their minimum regular program and were permitted to fund special ed, bilingual ed as part of their minimum expenditure requirement, will go from an expenditure, Bridgeport from \$2,718 to \$4,800. It's one and a half times of what they're presently spending on their regular program.

We feel it's a significant difference. We appreciate the fact that there are those who say, let's aim for a higher target immediately. We're saying, let's do what we can as fast as we can, knowing the political realities.

I've also submitted another graph which shows the impact of changing the two variables. The grant, the guaranteed wealth level, and the foundation level. For me, and I think for the Education Equity Study Committee, we voted that the heart of the new formula is the foundation.

When you lower the foundation that the State is going to put in, and maintain the \$4,800, the burden will fall on the local boards of education, and those with the least ability to pay for that difference will have to tax themselves at a higher rate than other communities.

If you lower the foundation itself, and make the minimum foundation less, then the poorest towns

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will not be able to spend more than the lower foundation, and again, the burden would fall on the lower communities. And I think you can see that in the graph that I propose.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Rita, you could help us by kind of wrapping up your testimony, because we have a long list of others, and I know Michael wants to --

RITA HENDEL: I'm all done, and I'd like to thank you.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Thank you.

MICHAEL HELFGOTT: Good morning. My name is Mike Helfgott and I'm Chairman of the Educational Equity, what is the name, Educational Equity Study Committee. After two years, I know it has a lot of e's in it. Let me first refer to what I understand is a handout that's been given to you. I'd like to quickly run through it, but in fact not spend an awful lot of time on this and instead, close and wrap up with some points that I think are important.

Starting as I often do from the bottom of the page and working up, I'd like to draw your attention to Item No. 4 on this handout, which simply, you will have it and I suspect --

The Item No. 4 which simply speaks to the base, is intended to remind all of us that our program, that is, what we propose, builds off of the grant dollars that will be going to all of the communities in 88-89. That is, we look at the dollars that each town will be receiving, both from the guaranteed tax base grant and from the EEA, that is the Enhancement Grant, and we work up from there.

Our proposal is that every town in subsequent years receives their base plus at least a 1% increase every year. I think that is important for many of you because unlike some of the GTB years when your grants went down from year to year, this proposal essentially holds every town harmless.

The transition plan is simply one that says we're going to take four years to move from the current system, that is in 88-89 to the new system, and we

would be there in the 92-93 year.

Let me spend a minute on the formula, which is really the top part of the paper and I'm going to try to simply point out some of what this means to me. It says, for instance, that your grant is intended to more clearly reflect the partnership between your town and the State. That is, every year, a separate calculation will be conducted for each town to determine how many dollars each town or each LEA must spend for the education of its kids. Obviously, the town can spend more.

The separate calculation would be how that cost, or how that budget is funded. That is, what part comes from local dollars and what part comes from State dollars. The State's portion is a percent that among other things is sensitive to the wealth of your community, compared to other towns' wealth, the wealth of other towns in the State.

I think more clearly than its predecessor, because of some of the comments that have been made by the Commissioner and Dorothy and Rita, this in my opinion, clarifies and tightens the link between the State and the local community and makes it more clear in my opinion, that this is a real partnership in spending.

Let me though, move quickly from that and leave you with some points that I think are important. Why are we doing this? I'm not sure we've really addressed that. I'm not talking about the political need, but the equity issue has been and continues to be that we observe very drastic disparities both in spending rates and taxing rates when we look at all of the communities in Connecticut.

We see some towns spend much more money on the education of their children than do other towns, and we find that some of the towns that spend the least amount of money, actually tax themselves higher than the towns that are able to spend more money on education. That, in my opinion, is really the core issue. That's the issue, those are the gaps that the Equity Committee, for every year of its existence, has been trying to deal with.

We're not suggesting we're going to make those disparities go away. What we are suggesting is that because of the increased sensitivities in this formula, that some of those disparities will begin to close or will close more quickly than they have been in recent years.

I would also want to suggest, or remind you, as I think I did when I was here before, that there's a limit to what we can do. We've never suggested this is a perfect formula. We necessarily are constrained by matters that relate to school finance. We do not get into housing patterns. We do not get into desegregation issues. We do not get into the tax structure.

This program assumes that, and builds itself on the grant list of a town and the property tax as a measure of wealth. Some people may differ from that, and obviously when we look at town light averages which that means, we know that in some poor communities there are very wealthy individuals and in some wealthy communities, there are some very poor individuals. But we do not propose, and we've never really spent a lot of time structurally suggesting that that be changed.

Lastly, let me say that our proposal is a trade off between pure, the achieving of pure equity on the one hand and pragmatism on the other. We consciously, intentionally, have proposed and recommended a formula that is tempered a bit from that which we think most purely would get at equity. We don't back off of that. We're not ashamed of that, but there are some pieces of our proposal which are (inaudible) equalizing, and we have made that by choice. The whole timeless works against equity a bit. Where you strike the balance with the foundation level and the guaranteed wealth level works against equity a bit, but we as a Committee, stand behind that because we think we do work in the real world and we do understand the pressures that are being brought to bear on all of us, and that is the State in part, the State has (inaudible) dollars.

Let me conclude my remarks at this point, and say that we're all welcome to questions from you.

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Thank you.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Mike, I've had a chance to say this before, but to you and to the State Board as well, and if Gerry was here, to Gerry as well, I think while we are in the middle of a debate over details, I think we all owe you collectively, a great deal of thanks for having brought this back before the Legislature in such a comprehensive and well thought out way, and also in a way that I think has involved a lot of debate. That doesn't mean we won't have the debate again here, it doesn't quite work that way. But I think at least you have framed the issues very well for us.

I have to ask one question, just in a nutshell. Since you're here on behalf of the Equity Committee, tell me once again, what are the principal differences between the Equity Committee's recommendations that are embodied in this bill, and the recommendations of the State Board of Education?

MICHAEL HELFGOTT: My understanding, I'm not sure if the bill reflects the Equity Committee or the State Board, but my understanding is that the essential difference is the weighting of the AFCD. That is, that the Equity Committee suggested a weighting of one-quarter, one-quarter. That is one-quarter for mastery, one-quarter for AFDC. The State Board upped the AFDC to one-half, which is a departure from what the Equity Committee recommended, but is, in fact, the weighting that's currently in the statutes.

RITA HENDEL: There was one other change. State Board voted that in the paragraph assigning the goal of 90, there was a change in word, but essentially meaning was kept the same. It was more of a clarification of the language.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Are there other questions?
Representative Langlois.

REP. LANGLOIS: As a person who sat in on many of the deliberations of the Equity Committee, I want to echo what Senator Sullivan said. In preparing for this public hearing, I went home and put all the files together, and they span a couple of feet of

computer printouts and the reports and everything, and it was a very thorough job.

I do have one question, and I think this gets at the heart of the matter. In Horton v. Meskill, the court read the mandates of equal rights and equal protection to mean that, and I quote, "the State provided substantially equal educational opportunity for its youth in free public elementary and secondary schools". Does the bill before us do that, in your mind?

SENATOR SULLIVAN: Let me guess the answer.

REP. LANGLOIS: I think it's important to get that on the record.

MICHAEL HELFGOTT: If the bill before us is fully, is implemented as presented to you, I don't think that we're suggesting that by the 1992, 92-93 school year, every kid is going to be getting a comparable education. What it will do, as Rita Hendel has suggested, is that if all spending is at the foundation level, there will be, which will be spending parity, there would be tax equity also.

We know in fact that won't happen. Already some districts, that is way before 92-93, are spending above the \$4,800 level. But we, two points. We think this is moving in the right direction and the important thing, and I think what we stand behind most firmly, is not just the dollar amounts but the formula, and that's significant to understand.

The formula, we are suggesting, is one that deals well with both large amounts of money and small amounts of money and I think that's a virtue. It says given finite resources, this formula will still hand those resources out much more equitably.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Representative Mintz.

REP. MINTZ: Thank you. I, too, want to commend the Commission on all it's work. I just have a few questions that voice my concerns about the formula. Representative Langlois said, read from Horton v. Meskill very eloquently and you answered the question, but my question to you is, I represent the City of Norwalk. Don't you think that under

this formula there are towns that are held harmless that might be able to bring a lawsuit under Horton v. Meskill and succeed to have this formula thrown out as not being fair and equitable to the children of those towns?

MICHAEL HELFGOTT: Let me give two answers to that. I really don't think that would be the case. I'm not suggesting though, that every town is treated equally in terms of justice on this. We've said from day one, that no matter what formula we came up with, there would be a couple of towns that might not seem to fit as well as others.

I think we felt that about its predecessor, that is the guaranteed tax base formula. I know many of you who have been part of the debate for the last ten years will recall that Stamford year in and year out has come before this Committee to complain that the GTB didn't adequately understand Stamford.

But we didn't know what two or three towns, because we didn't know in the early days of our Committee, what the final form would be. But we always, I think, understood that some towns would feel they didn't fit well.

In a more direct response to your question, I would say this. I believe firmly, that if in fact, Norwalk and Danbury and Stamford feel that they don't fit that neatly into this formula and if in fact they're not treated as well as some of the other towns, when you still come back to the core issues which are the amount of money they are able to spend on their students and how much they have to tax themselves to do so, I would suggest that by 92-93, those towns will still be in much better shape than will some of the urban, more urban areas and some of the more rural areas.

Again, relative to how they've been treated in the past, it may look like they're not doing as well and maybe they don't fit as well as other towns in the formula, but again, by the fourth year of this new program, I still think they will have less of a challenge than would some of the poor rural towns and some of the more heavily urban towns.

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REP. MINTZ: Well, let's talk about the formula itself, Dick. You talk about, that you put need factors into the formula. As a matter of fact, Norwalk, for instance, does not even get into the formula because of the State aid percentage, is that correct?

MICHAEL HELFGOTT: Well, Norwalk, that depends. It depends on where the aid percentage is, and where the guaranteed wealth -- I want to make the distinction between the formula.

REP. MINTZ: Under the proposed bill.

MICHAEL HELFGOTT: If Norwalk is above the guaranteed wealth level, then you're right, it's going to miss some of the formula, as will a lot of other towns.

REP. MINTZ: Right. Well, I understand. And the State aid percentages one minus the town wealth over the guaranteed wealth, and could you just define what the term town wealth is.

MICHAEL HELFGOTT: Yeah, both the computation for the town and for the State target has to do with property wealth divided by need pupil. Essentially, what we're looking at, and this goes back to what I said before, we don't, we're not using the income tax. We're not using at least in a straightforward manner, per capita income as a measure of a community's wealth. I think the tradition in Connecticut has been that on one of our workforces is the local property tax and the property tax in the grant list has been a measure of community wealth in Connecticut for quite some time.

What we have done is therefore, we take a town's grand list and as some kind of measure of how much wealth there is in that community, and we divide it by not just pupils, but need pupils, to see how much taxing power there is behind each kid, and that's the computation we come up with. So that's what we would do in Norwalk. We took your equalized net grand list per need pupil and compared it to the target towns equalized in that grand list per pupil.

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REP. MINTZ: And you already testified that you didn't look at the income of the people who live in those houses.

MICHAEL HELFGOTT: Well, we then do. We then do. What I meant was, this formula, because we don't tax income in Connecticut, this formula is its main measure of wealth, looks at property, but we then do make an income adjustment.

REP. MINTZ: Well that's, but the main thrust of the formula is driven by the property value.

MICHAEL HELFGOTT: There's both in there because we make a per capita income adjustment.

REP. MINTZ: I understand that, but that's on the end --

RITA HENDEL: It's called the adjusted equalized net grand list. The property value is done on a per need pupil basis. Then there's an income factor. The income factor for that town on a per capita basis. One is on, the property tax is based on a per need pupil and the income factor is factored into that formula, into the same part of the ratio. It's called the adjusted equalized net grand list. And the income factor is based on per capita.

REP. MINTZ: I understand that.

RITA HENDEL: But it's equal (inaudible)

DOROTHY GOODWIN: I think there's one other point that needs to be made here, and I'll make it very briefly because it's an enormous subject and we can't really go into it, but there is a major influence on the ability of a township to support education that this formula does not deal with and that is the cost of essential long educational government services.

This is an area which the Education Committee and the Education Department, either one of them, really able to address. If you want to address that, you've somehow got to work with the Finance Committee well enough to do it. That's a problem for the Legislature, not the Department of

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Education. I would urge you to address it. I think it is urgent. I don't think it will particularly help Norwalk. It won't help Bridgeport, but it will not particularly help Norwalk, but it would be a step in the direction of equity.

REP. MINTZ: Thank you for that. I disagree that it wouldn't help Norwalk, because we have essential services that are not taken into account at all that need to be provided that certain other towns don't have to provide it, i.e., the size of a police department, a fire department, and sewage disposal, just to name a few.

The other thing that I just wanted to say is that the property values of this State are creeping up the cost. I believe about six months ago, the first million dollar house was sold in New Haven and what this formula doesn't take into account is that the people, especially in my town, have been living in those houses for 20 or 30 years, and what you're basing a formula on is unrealized capital gains that they are not able to support and the taxes that they have to pay.

MICHAEL HELFGOTT: I mentioned (inaudible) and I understand your point, and I don't want to get the Committee (inaudible-coughing) the virtues of the property tax versus an income tax, but to the extent that people may own homes and therefore they may be measured as being more wealthy than they really are, especially if they've lived in their homes for 20 years, 30 years, or if it's an ancestral home and it's been in the family for hundreds of years, to an extent that happens in every community.

I recognize that the rate of rising costs is more dramatic in some towns than is in others, but there too, Statewide in virtually every town we've seen dramatic increases and we catch that in this. But in some years, some portions of the State will have more rapid increases, and in other years, that in fact may change to some other parts of the State as for instance, the remaining land seems to be positioned more, for instance, in northeastern Connecticut.

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You could find in the next couple of years, for instance, that the values in northeastern Connecticut might increase more dramatically than in other parts of the State, because that's where most of the available land is.

REP. MINTZ: I have nothing further, then. Thank you.

SEN. SULLIVAN: The last question, because we in fairness, we really, we have had a chance to talk with Michael before today at a work session. But for the last question, Representative Gilbert and then we're going to move along down the list.

REP. GILBERT: We talked about Horton v. Meskill. I guess this is Gilbert v. Mastery Testing. I have a large problem with the mastery testing. My immediate feeling is not to go with a new formula, until that problem is addressed. I see a town just like the Olympics, you throw out the high, you throw out the low, you make sure you come up with a good enough score so it looks good in the paper, the towns don't get knocked, your school system doesn't get knocked and you're still able to meet the guidelines to get some financing through the mastery testing for remedial instructors or whatever the case may be.

West Haven, in particular, kids are being trained indirectly for the mastery testing before it's taking place, and there are probably other towns that are doing the same thing. I think what you're doing is, you're playing a financial ball game with something that's an essential part of their education and I just don't, I don't know what the answer is. I've been thinking about it. I've talked to hundreds of people about this same problem. It's just, to me it's a real problem.

We're not addressing, and I don't think, mastery testing and the problems that the kids are having, financially is not the way to address it in the formula.

MICHAEL HELFGOTT: Let me make a comment about mastery test and I'll try not to prolong it because we talked about it before, but we knew from the very beginning that we would have a problem with the

perception of what we were doing with mastery test.

But I'm going to try to suggest to you that in fact, in makes a lot of sense, and further that in fact, that's one of the factors that channels dollars to the communities that I think we think need it the most.

When the Legislature enacted the law that created the mastery test, we, first of all, we felt, the Legislature felt that it was a much more rigorous, fair educationally sound tool than its predecessor, which was the proficiency test. That is, it tested all kids in the 4th, 6th and 8th grade level according to the, tested them to understand their knowledge of skills that we felt were important.

One of the opposing view at that time was that it would lead to a homogenization of the curriculum and maybe given that town's teeth to the test a bit, maybe that has happened. On the other hand, I don't think anybody ever felt that the skills that are being tested were inappropriate. In fact, they seem to make a lot of sense.

Also, we've always said that the funding of education is a partnership between State and the LEAs of the communities. And, so what we asked you to do was, we said give this test to all your kids. Identify those who need some kind of remediation and help them, and that is educationally sound.

What we never did, though, was to keep our part of the bargain, that is the partnership. We're telling you or we've told you, again, to identify those kids, put extra dollars towards them so that you can remedy their scores below a certain level and have them master these items, and we never helped you fund that.

By incorporating those test scores into this formula, in my opinion, we're keeping that compact. We've told you to put more money towards these kids and we're helping you fund that remedial part of it to this program.

I don't think you're going to find anybody, for instance, trying to consciously, or otherwise, keep the scores down to get more money. I don't think

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anybody would really do that. I don't think they can get away with it.

REP. MINTZ: It's reality.

MICHAEL HELFGOTT: I would suggest that really isn't. In all fairness, I would like to know how any town

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in this State could possibly, possibly rig lowering its test scores to get more money. I mean, I'm trying to think of a conspiracy. It would have to involve students, teachers, administrators, parents. My son is in the 4th grade this year. I have seen his mastery results. They've been a helpful tool as have the other tests that our school system gives by its own local choice.

If somebody told me they were going to not teach my son the skills so that Willington could get more money, I suspect I would be in court against Willington. I mean, I just don't see how that can happen.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Thank you very much, and I know if members of the Committee have questions as we go along, toward our deadline of the 28th with this bill, which we are going to try very hard to bring forward this year, we will appreciate your further assistance along the way. Thank you.

MICHAEL HELFGOTT: Thank you for your time.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Thank you. The next person who has signed up -- we're going to run this until, having started a little late, we're going to run this until the close of the full hour. The next person is Representative Taborsak followed by Senator Harper.

REP. TABORSAK: Thank you, Senator Sullivan. My name is Lynn Taborsak, and I represent the 109th District in Danbury and of course, I endorse the State's march toward equity in education. But I'm here this morning because the Danbury public school system is a casualty in the new formula and have brought with me those two individuals that can best describe how our school system and our community is affected. And joining me at the table this morning

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is the Vice-Chair of the Danbury Board of Education
Marisa Gersowitz and the Mayor of the City of
Danbury, Joseph Sauer.

MARISA GERSHOWITZ: Good morning, my name is Marisa
Gershowitz and I'm the Vice-Chairperson of the
Danbury Board of Education.

First, let me thank you for the time and attention
you're giving to the very important educational
equity funding formula. It's important at the
outset for me to say that it is critical to look at
the State insuring equitable educational
opportunities for all our children.

The current proposed formula has come a long way in
offering this help and it is not therefore, either
the concept of the formula or the enactment of the
formula that Danbury is opposed to.

And yet, this formula is devastating to Danbury's
educational effort. While this will accomplish
equity for most of the State's students, you will
create an inequity for some. We are in unusual
circumstances in Danbury and feel that the formula
does not allow the flexibility necessary to deal
with the individual and special needs we, and other
towns like us, have.

Danbury is a community proud of its multi-ethnic
makeup. It's pride brings with it responsibility
and at times, these responsibilities vie for a
limited number of our taxpayers' dollars. We as
the hub of our ten-town region, are the major
source of social service offerings. These include
shelters for the homeless, low and moderate income
housing, subsidized housing for the elderly, family
and youth services, the battered women's center,
community action and many other social services
associated with need.

As the formula stands now, our invisible needs are
not being taken into account. These include
working families living at or below poverty level
who are not on AFDC, and children who are
non-English speaking, who are not taking the
mastery test and are therefore, not eligible in the
formula.

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There is the illusion that we are doing well, and we are, to a great extent. However, most of us could not afford to buy our own homes, and our low level of employment clearly does not reflect the deep pockets of poverty in our community.

The Fairfield County standards do not apply here. While we rank 77th in property wealth, we rank 94th in per capita income and 7th in student need. Given the current proposed allocation to Danbury, we would be forced to play the educational needs against other major social service needs of our community. This is, I believe, politically, financially and morally unfair to us.

There are several ways that you can speak to this issue, and we feel that earmarking specific funding for districts that fall between the cracks would help to address our educational needs and be the most supportive and direct way to deal with the flaw in this formula.

In addition, I would refer you to the enclosed articles by our Superintendent of Schools, Doctor Anthony (inaudible), as well as articles by the Danbury News Times. Thank you for your time and consideration.

MAYOR JOSEPH SAUER: I would like to thank the Committee for allowing me to testify this morning. My name is Joe Sauer. My background includes 25 years in public education and last November, I was honored by the City of Danbury and asked to be its Mayor.

Marisa has given you the meat of our concern. We do have some problems, I think, that are unique, at least to only a few cities. One is, of course, as Marisa has said, we do represent the hub of social services in our area to smaller towns. None of them have the homeless problem or the facilities to handle the homeless problem that come in part to their towns.

SEN. SULLIVAN: If you could help us by summarizing our testimony because we're running out (inaudible).

MAYOR JOSEPH SAUER: I shall do that. I think we are suggesting that the Committee take a look at a

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supplemental amount of money, raising the bottom line as it were, not changing the formula, we're not asking that, to look once again at the statistics that certainly you have more than we, and asking that an additional amount be given to cities who are suffering from the ills of the formula, the new formula for the GTB. Thank you very much.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Representative Pelto. Any questions?

REP. PELTO: Okay. I'm sorry, one quick question. I take it that you're speaking not only against the formula, but against the GTB formula as well, since, is it my understanding, that next year Danbury would drop by a million dollars in the 88-89 GTB formula. So Danbury is against either maintaining the status quo or moving forward.

MARISA GERSHOWITZ: Representative Pelto, let me just say that Danbury is not opposed to the formula. And I think that needs to be very clear. We are as a group, feeling that there is inequity in funding in Connecticut and we would like to see the Legislature take action on the equity funding bill.

Our concern at this point, is to make sure that Danbury is part of that equity, and Danbury, I should say the other towns that are involved as well. I think we speak to equity as the issue, not solely to Danbury's needs.

REP. PELTO: How much does your grant drop for 88-89?

MARISA GERSHOWITZ: I don't have that number, I'm sorry.

REP. PELTO: A million dollars, I think. Okay.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Thank you very, very much.

MARISA GERSHOWITZ: Mr. Sullivan, Senator Sullivan, I'm sorry. If I might add one thing. I would also ask the Legislature to take strong action to insure that local governmental bodies be held responsible for using supplementary funding, not to replace the local effort, but indeed to supplement it, and I think that's critical in this act. Thank you very much.

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SEN. SULLIVAN: As you leave, let me just say that your testimony and Representative Mintz's questions, I think, do point out the biggest problem we've got to wrestle with in terms of the impact both of the proposed formula and to some degree the present GTB on smaller cities, larger suburbs. And we will be wrestling with that.

MARISA GERSHOWITZ:d Thank you very much.

SEN. SULLIVAN: On a gracious yield from the Arts Commission, Senator Harper.

GARY YOUNG: Senator Sullivan, members of the Committee --

SEN. SULLIVAN: Gary, if you could identify yourself.

GARY YOUNG: I'm Gary Young, executive director of the Connecticut Commission on the Arts and we're going to be brief today. We're here to speak about Bill 541 establishing a Connecticut Arts Endowment Fund, and we'd like to open, I'll introduce my Chairman Susan Kelly to open very brief remarks and then I will speak for a few moments, and we'd like to conclude with our special guest, Senator Harper.

SUSAN KELLY: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I'm Susan Kelly, Chairman of the Commission on the Arts. The Commission on the Arts is solidly behind the concept of an Arts Endowment Fund. The idea of using public funding for established or expand endowments that would create sustained income for the arts far into the future is a breakthrough.

Proposed by Millard Prior at a Commission sponsored conference entitled Arts 2000, it is a means to break the cycle of strangling benefits. There could also be leverage for dramatic new levels of community support for the arts and a way to sustain their affect. The result could be a long-term stabilization of income vital to the survival of our artistic assets.

The key issue is how to amass sufficient resources to generate enough income to make a real, not a token difference, in the future. Gary Young, our executive director will address specifics of that

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five or six years from now. I'd rather see other features, if they could be built into, if they could encourage people to save and that's the key thing here and that's why I'm positive about the bill.

That particular feature, I don't think is all that significant, although it does show that you're providing some financial incentive. But I think the reality of it is, I'd rather not fool the people, the reality of it is, it's not any great incentive.

SEN. SULLIVAN: I think the last comments are significant, is an interesting one. As you know, Illinois has gone forward with the \$25,000 credit exemption --

FRANK RESNICK: Yes.

SEN. SULLIVAN: -- if you will, on accumulate savings. I suspect it does make it attractive to market it, to tell people that there will be such an offset should they make that savings.

On the other hand, I don't think we want to be in a position of surprising people, five, ten, or 20 years down the line into savings by telling them yes, you did get your credit for State aid purposes. Of course, it was more than made up by loss of federal eligibility.

FRANK RESNICK: That's right.

SEN. SULLIVAN: That's not what we're here to do. Also, I would be concerned if as you suggest, it has the tendency to reduce the degree to which State aid is available to help the needy.

FRANK RESNICK: And it has that potential.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Are there other questions? Thank you very much.

FRANK RESNICK: Thank you very much.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Thomas Malady. Tom Malady. Going once, going twice, gone. We're now going to move to Senate Bill 539. The first person to sign up is

not here and we will call him when he returns to the room. Jim Finley.

JAMES FINLEY: Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, my name is Jim Finley, Jr., I'm a legislative services director for the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities.

Raised Committee Bill 539 makes a needed and real start toward further reducing education spending disparities between towns. It is the minimum program and provides the minimum funding required to start the job of reducing those disparities in a way that recognizes local government's ability to pay.

However, while it is a step in the right direction, CCM has a number of concerns which we will discuss in this testimony. In particular, we applaud the following aspects of the bill.

Number one, provision of roughly \$103 million in new State aid each year, with most of this increase linked to local educational and fiscal need. However, while \$103 million looks like a great deal of money, it will not be enough to accomplish the goal of equalization at the pace which it deserves.

Number two, improvement of the GTB formula, by making it both easier to understand and also less subject to year by year fluctuations, in town grant amounts that make fiscal planning nearly impossible.

And three, consolidation of part of the Education Enhancement Act gains by insuring that every town gets at least its third and final year GTB EEA total plus 1% a year. This correctly recognizes that every city and town has educational costs which are increasing and will continue to increase.

It should be noted however, that even the proposed 1% growth figure will represent a real decline after inflation, since even the most optimistic forecast put inflation rates at well above the 1% level.

These three improvements are strongly deserving of

support by the Education Committee. We must, however, reiterate that this bill is the absolute minimum required to do the job.

There was a consensus among those that proposed this program. The Educational Equity Study Committee on which CCM is represented, that it did not provide enough funds as rapidly as was needed to meet constitutional and equitable objectives.

Nevertheless, the report endorsed by the majority of the Educational Equity Study Committee scaled back the total amount of funding because, in our opinion, of an over-sensitivity to the State's bottom line.

CCM and others, oppose that scaling back. But the Educational Equity Study Committee, and the State Board of Education explicitly adopted as a policy goal, a more ambitious program. The difference between the program adopted as a policy goal and the program recommended to you, underscores our point that fundamental objectives are not being met.

Our concern about the plan recommended by the Educational Equity Study Committee, more embodied in a minority report which was signed by five other members, and which highlighted the Plan's shortcomings. One of the minority reports recommendations keeping the AFDC weighting at 50%, was accepted by the State Board of Education and is thus in the bill before you today.

However, the following other criticisms still apply to this bill and will be repeated briefly today. One, the increases to State aid are not large enough and in fact, scale back the growth rate under the Education Enhancement Act.

The average annual increase in State aid under the recommended plan projected at 11-1/2%, dropping below 10% growth in the last year of the four year transition, compared to an average annual growth of 15.8% in the preceding four years, or 18.1% a year if limited just to the EEA period.

The graph we have attached to our testimony, shows these yearly increases. The projected growth in

State aid for 1992-93, 9.7% is less than in all but two of the 12 previous years since the effective commencement of the GTB. That is why the Educational Equity Study Committee's early estimates of the needed amount of equalization aid came to so much more than the final recommendation. Annual increases in the same order of magnitude of the EEA years, would reach that earlier goal.

Two, under the proposed formula, the State would fund considerably less than 50% of "regular program spending" by local governments on public education. Since GTB and EEA grants are already 70% of total State aid for local public education, the successor program should be the main vehicle for the State becoming an equal spending partner with municipalities.

We project that the recommended program would have the State paying about 42% of regular program spending for primary and secondary education. This is because all spending above the minimum expenditure requirement is locally funded. The State's share would be 49.6% if no town exceeded its MER. The State should reward towns which spend above the minimum. One possible remedy would be a sliding scale reimbursement for spending above the MER.

Three, the formula places too much of a spending burden on local governments. One hundred and twelve towns with over two-thirds of the State's population would have to increase local spending by an aggregate \$164 million. Some towns would have to increase local spending by more than 50%. For some, required local spending would increase more than four times faster than increases to State aid. Those increases result primarily from the low guaranteed wealth level, two times the median which is now the 81st percentile. That level is a retreat from the 95th percentile GWL under the GTB program.

That lower GWL directly excludes 32 towns from receiving equalization aid, indirectly excludes 18 for being just below the GWL and provides inadequate State aid to the others. In fact, CCM simulations show that any equalization in per pupil spending that results from the recommended plan,

comes only from the new MER, and elimination of the alternate MER, and not from increases in State aid.

One possible remedy. Increase the guaranteed wealth level to the 90th percentile. This would reduce the increase level cost to \$42 million down from \$164 million. More important, it would yield further equalization due to the new State aid.

Four, the recommended plan unlike GTB, does not take into account local tax effort. While the plan incorporates tax capacity it takes no notice of tax effort. Some towns that already have high property taxes would be faced with new burdens. Based on 1986-87 effective tax rates, four of the ten highest tax towns would have to increase local education spending. This ignores one of the Committee's most important findings in this area.

If increased State aid via a formula which includes tax effort hasn't narrowed disparities, increased aid via formula which ignores tax effort almost certainly will not. One possible remedy is to return tax effort to the aid formula, or at least provide a transition fund to give grants to high tax towns facing increased local costs.

These concerns suggest a need for more ambitious State aid program, for educational equalization. More funds distributed to towns more quickly. We have suggested, for example, that increasing the DWL is one of several remedies to improve the program. We have two other specific concerns about the draft bill before this Committee. One concerns the hold harmless provision in subsection (t) of Section 1. We think that no town should ever experience a major cut in State aid in this area.

Under the provision however, a town whose wealth increase several years from now would put it above the GWL, might find its aid actually cut by a significant amount. That town would get its 1988-89 base aid, plus a number of years of 1% growth, rather than a previous year's aid plus 1%. This provision should be changed.

Our second specific concern with the draft bill is about an element not sufficiently considered at the time the Educational Equity Study Committee and the

State Board of Education were considering the proposal. This is the minimum expenditure requirement for the transition years, that is, the years 1989-90, 90-91 and 91-92.

Under the second alternative in subsection (a) of Section 4 in the draft bill, towns can be required to spend the same amount of regular program expenditures as they did in the previous year, as well as spending all increases in aid under the program. This could mean that the MER is increasing more rapidly than the amount of State aid.

We support the provision to instead implement the MER at the same pace as State aid as provided in the first alternative of subsection (a) of Section 4 in the draft bill.

In conclusion, a new program in education financing equalization should reduce disparities in education spending and funding between municipalities, provide enough funds so that all children in Connecticut, especially in the poorer districts, can get the equalization of educational opportunity that they deserve and which is their right.

This bill before you today would make some progress toward these goals, but in our opinion, at too slow a pace. Thank you.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Jim, first let me commend you on your outstanding taste in shirts and ties.

JAMES FINLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Do you have a total net additional cost over the proposal that is in front of us for the recommendations that you have made, in (inaudible)

JAMES FINLEY: I don't at this time, but I'd be glad to transmit it to the Committee at a later date.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Any estimates in mind?

JAMES FINLEY: I don't.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Your testimony in support of what you would like, or CCM would like to see in this bill.

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I'm going to ask you to weigh that against the passage of some bill. Which do you think, does CCM consider it more important that we follow the recommendations here if it means not being able to act and having to take more time to act, or that it's more important to get something on the books this year, that is improvement over where we are.

JAMES FINLEY: I think it's more important for the General Assembly to act this year to get something on the books that perhaps next Session the i's can be dotted and the t's crossed. But I think it's very important, not only for cities and towns, but for the children of this State, the General Assembly act this year.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Thank you. Other questions?
Representative Nystrom.

REP. NYSTROM: Thank you. Representative Nystrom for the record. You mentioned a number, \$164 million in new costs for local share. How did you arrive at that? Did you base it on the same --

JAMES FINLEY: That's based on what they're spending is in 85-86 and projected what it would be in 1992-93.

REP. NYSTROM: With this package?

JAMES FINLEY: Yes.

REP. NYSTROM: Okay. Do you have a breakout by town?

JAMES FINLEY: Yes, I do.

REP. NYSTROM: Could you supply that to the Committee?

JAMES FINLEY: Be glad to.

REP. NYSTROM: That's all. Thank you.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Any questions? Thank you. Robert Dakers.

ROBERT DAKERS: Senator Sullivan, members of the Education Committee, my name is Robert Dakers, assistant to the Mayor of the City of Norwalk. I'm here today to speak on behalf of Mayor Frank Esposito and we have some people here from the

city's board of estimate and board of education who will be speaking after me.

My comments today will be in regard to Senate Bill 539. Before starting, I want to thank the Committee for hearing us today on this important issue which will obviously have a big affect on the education of our children and on municipal budgets for many years to come.

The proposed education aid program included in Senate Bill 539 is of particular concern for cities like Norwalk. As you know, according to the proposed program, Norwalk would only receive the hold harmless amount of plus 1%.

I do want to state that the City of Norwalk agrees with the study committee's intent to better target aid for communities such as Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven and other urban areas. However, we strongly believe that the proposed formula does not reflect the great need that exists in central cities in our part of the State, such as Stamford and Norwalk and Danbury.

Some of the specific shortcomings that we see with the formula include first, that the committee should consider measuring wealth at a per capita as opposed to, on a per capita as opposed to per student basis. Using wealth per student does not reflect the local tax dollars in an urban community to have to apply toward a wide range of needs.

A second major concern with the formula is that it's principal measure of wealth, namely, the equalized net grand list per capita, does not, provides an inflated measure of our community's wealth. While housing prices have been increasing in Norwalk, the average circumstances of the average Norwalker have changed little.

These increased poverty values only help someone they want to move out of town. In other words, our equalized net grand list includes a large percentage of the so-called unrealized capital gains.

A third important issue is that Norwalk's heavy, is that the formula is heavy concentration on wealth

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as measured by equalized net grand list and per capita income does not take into account the educational and other needs that exist in Norwalk.

While I realize that AFDC students in mastery test scores have been included in the proposed formula, these only adjust the wealth measure and these factors are overwhelmed by the dominating force of the equalized net grand list for Norwalk.

Needs factor such as AFDC students, mastery test scores, and other appropriate measures, should be made separate components of the formula.

In conclusion, the citizens of Norwalk have always shown a willingness to help meet many of the housing, social and other pressing needs that exist in our region and in the State. All we are asking for now is a fair shake in regard to funding our significant educational needs.

I would like to urge you to develop a new formula that would treat cities like Bridgeport, Hartford and New Haven as well or better than the proposed formula, but which would, at the same time better reflect the needs that exist in cities such as Stamford and Norwalk and Danbury.

This is a practical recommendation that could be accomplished, at least in part, by incorporating the suggestions touched upon earlier in my testimony. Again, I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak to you in regard to this important matter.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Let me just, not for your benefit, but for other speakers. If you have provided us with written testimony, please help us by summarizing rather than reading what you've provided to us. (inaudible).

PAT KRAUSE: Hello. I'm Pat Krause, a member of the Board of Education of Norwalk. Since this is the first time that I've had the opportunity to address you all, I ask some advice ahead of time in terms of well, what should I say and how should I say it.

And the advice I was given was, do something dramatic. And, in lieu of a multi-media grandiose

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presentation, what I decided to do was tell a very brief story, which I think reflects our unhappiness with the formula, though we would very much rather be supporting the entire formula, in its entirety.

The story that's told about the Spaceship Apollo when it was headed for the moon, with a new goal that had never before been reached was, as a matter of fact, 90% of the time off track. But it reached the moon. The reason that it reached the moon was that there was constant monitoring and correction to be bringing it back on course.

And to me, the connecticut and the analogy is very applicable in this situation, and our efforts here are as, you're probably tired about hearing about Norwalk from Doug and company --

SEN. SULLIVAN: We're just mostly tired of Doug.

PAT KRAUSE: But we must be advocates for those children that happen to live in Connecticut that happen to live in Norwalk. We want to fulfill your and our commitment to them, to have them ready for the 21st Century, to have them able to reach their kind of goals and the goals that we all want. We need more money to do it. We want to stand behind the formula, but we want to stand behind a formula that speaks for all of the children, and that is what will now be detailed by Claudia and Susan. Thank you.

CLAUDIA FABRICANT: My name is Claudia Fabricant from Norwalk, and I'm speaking to you on behalf of the Central Council of the Norwalk Parent-Teacher Associations.

The proposed equity formula gives Norwalk the appearance of being much more (inaudible) than it actually is. Our real estate values have skyrocketed 300% in these past several years due to the housing shortage and the corporate development in our area.

In truth, Norwalk is a city of modest means, smack in the middle of some of the wealthiest communities in our county and in our country, and most average Norwalkers would not be able to buy their own homes at today's inflated prices.

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We have a city school system with a 40% minority enrollment. Mastery tests show that between 25 and 50% of our children fall below the remedial level on one or more tests. More than 20% of our children come from single parent homes, and almost 10% of our families fall below the national poverty level, which does not reflect Fairfield County's inflated standard of living.

We hope that you see that Norwalk is a unique community, with unique problems. Please consider that we have not been treated fairly under the new formula and that the new formula will be harmful to the standard of education that we've worked so hard to provide for all our students, regardless of ethnicity and income.

We hope that you will make an exception in Norwalk's case to accurately represent our needs. Along with the copies of this statement, I also present to you today, petitions that were signed by nearly 600 concerned parents and staff of Norwalk schools who fervently hope that you will understand and act on Norwalk's human needs. Thank you.

SUSAN WALLERSTEIN: My name is Susan Wallerstein and I'm a member of the Norwalk Board of Estimate and Taxation which has even a more vested interest in seeing what you do above and beyond the educators in support of Mr. Dakers as well, and I speak on their behalf.

Since we have two nights of public hearings this week on the tax rate that I'm supposed to go back and set some time between 8:00 and 10:00 tonight, I have omitted from my statement, anything that Mr. Dakers and Mrs. Fabrican and Mrs. Krause, and for the most part, the people in Danbury very, very appropriately expressed.

The bottom line is this. Norwalk is a big loser once these numbers get crunched, and without the increases in State aid, Norwalk's ability to provide not only for education, but also for the other needs, looks bleak. It is understandable that any formula you work with which seeks to achieve equity in educational spending, among 169 school districts in the State as to versus

Connecticut, would have a few wrinkles.

It's my contention and the contention that most of the other people, that Norwalk and Danbury are your wrinkles. The impact of the formula worsens, as Mr. Daker's pointed out, when you take already artificial wealth and you calculate it per student rather than per capita.

One of the things we'll hear Wednesday and Thursday nights is about our increasing number of senior citizens, and the statistics bear us out. The number of residents over 65 in our community has increased from 8% in 1970 census, to nearly 11% in the 1980 census. We are not a large growth area in terms of young families with children, and 30% of Norwalk adults over 25 do not have a high school diploma. These are not people who can and should be expected to support education through their local tax dollars at the same level as taxpayers from some of our neighboring towns. We have problems with the factors and the variables incorporated in the need. That's already been outlined.

Mr. Helfgott would have you believe that in fact the purview of the board or the State Board of Education, cannot take into consideration things like housing as factors in looking at communities. But doesn't it seem somehow ironic and inconsistent that Commissioner Tirozzi is proposing financial incentives for new regional desegregation solutions, while ignoring the very real current costs of supporting an integrated school system like Norwalk.

After all, you can tell that a town's, the racial composition of a town's school system is but a reflection of a deeper community commitment to integration that is achieved not by bussing children from Wilton to Bridgeport, but by responsible development, maintenance of affordable housing, and support of vast human services.

There is no other small city school system in Connecticut with approximately the same number of students, just under 10,000, and a 40% minority enrollment, which is not slated to receive significantly more State aid than Norwalk. What is

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the lesson to us? There is money for towns that are not racially balanced now but might be willing to experiment.

There is money for school systems located in different parts of the State with less inflated property values. But there is no money for a town like Norwalk which addresses the social needs and makes an enormous (inaudible) effort to reflect the diverse social and community expectations.

Come back to us folks when you get poorer, or blacker, or whiter, or more Hispanic. If the Commissioner's plan gets off the drawing board, Norwalk could provide an important model, a magnet school system if you will, because maintaining this delicate socio-economic balance has a high price.

What do we suggest you do? Make an exception. Provide additional State funding beyond that 1% for Norwalk, and justify this to yourself and to your constituents, not only because for a wrinkle in an otherwise admirable formula, but because you as legislators can recognize the benefits of paying now to maintain balance, rather than having to come up with the money later, to correct the imbalance. Thank you.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Thank you very much. Having been somewhat facetious before, let me just say that what you already know (inaudible) are very fortunate to have Representative Mintz advocating for you on this Committee and (inaudible). Are there any questions? Representative Pelto.

REP. PELTO: I do have a couple of questions. And perhaps some of them are for the Danbury people and can be answered at another time, but the ones for the Norwalk issue. Let me first say how appreciative I am that you focus in on the inflated property issue, because, when we really look at it, that's the crux of the problem, and if you can convince your legislative delegation to sign on to my income tax bill, we'll probably be able to take care of this in the next few years.

But putting aside that for the moment, if we can try to isolate, if we can try to isolate this issue of what the crux of the problem is, because you

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brought up a couple of things which I'm not sure I understand as being legitimate issues.

If you calculate it per student, as opposed to per capita, and were funding our schools, obviously, on a rationale of per student, do you have a problem with that as a policy mechanism, when in fact that is something that would occur across the State, not just in Norwalk.

ROBERT DAKERS: It's, I think the concern that we've expressed is about the (inaudible) and we feel it's inflated, is that one, you have to look at that property tax base has to meet many needs. And one reason we feel it's inflated is that a high property tax base also carries a high price tag for things like sewer treatment plant, roads, full-time paid fire department. So I think we're left with a net wealth which we're left to finance our school system with. So I think it's that basis where we advocate the per capita, is that (inaudible) for many things and not just the school system.

REP. PELTO: But that certainly holds true for each and every one of our communities where the net equalized grand list has to uphold a whole series of services. My question is, in a number of your testimony, you referred to the per capita as opposed to per student, and I'm asking, are you doing that because particularly, Norwalk, or because you don't believe that it should be calculated on per student?

SUSAN WALLERSTEIN: Well, part of it is particularly Norwalk. I think what Mr. Dakers addressed was the Fairfield County syndrome, or large city. That's an urban syndrome. That's probably not Norwalk, specific. But in terms of Norwalk as compared with Danbury, which is an enormous growth area, I mean, you know, half the school teachers in Greenwich are living in Danbury and in the greater Brookfield and in that area, because you have affordable housing.

What I was trying to illustrate by the increase in the residents over 65 and although we all contend that everyone should pay for quality education, is we have a decreasing percentage of our population in that part of the State because of the lack of

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having one factor deriving direct benefit from the school system, and that's another reason why I think it should go per capita rather than per student. Those are the people I'm going to hear Wednesday and Thursday night at the public hearings.

The student enrollment is down significantly. How come the money is going up?

(cass 4)

REP. PELTO: Okay, I guess I'm still having a little trouble understanding your position on the per capita per student, but let me ask one other then. The issue of AFDC and mastery testing as being potentially legitimate measures of increasing per need student count, Norwalk's position on that issue.

ROBERT DAKERS: I think when you find me the formula that said, we support those two factors, but even with those two factors in the formula, it's still not enough to even bring us out of the hold harmless category. But on the other hand, theoretically, with MER we had to spend more because of those two. We have the need students times the base, so theoretically, it's making us spend more but it's still not enough to bring us over the hold harmless.

REP. PELTO: Again, though, something that happens in a lot of other communities as well.

ROBERT DAKERS: Well, you'll probably find very few of the hold harmless towns that have as many AFDC students and mastery tests per student as we have. Particularly the AFDC, the mastery, I can't speak to that directly.

REP. COHEN: Other questions? Representative Mintz.

REP. MINTZ: I just wanted to thank you all for coming and presenting your case very well. I'm sure that my fellow legislators have heard what you said and will certainly (inaudible) to solve all those problems.

REP. COHEN: Anything to get you out of my office.

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ROBERT DAKERS: Thank you.

REP. COHEN: Thank you. Bill Olds. Then Ed Dorsett.

WILLIAM OLDS: Thank you. For the record, I'm Bill Olds, the executive director of the Connecticut Civil Liberties Union, and I'm here to address the school finance issue. I will summarize my remarks. I've already presented the Committee with the three page presentation.

There is no question that this is an extremely complex and very difficult issue for all of us to understand and to comprehend. I agree with the remarks made earlier of the Chair that Michael Helfgott and the Equity Committee deserve a great deal of credit for their Herculean task that they performed in putting this together.

The State Board of Education and the Equity Committee have admittedly, however, adopted a pragmatic approach. They acknowledge that their proposal may be inadequate, but they've decided to do what they believe is politically pragmatic at this time.

Six members of the Educational Equity Study Committee issued a minority report. You heard some comments by the representative of the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities a few minutes ago, and I'm sure that John Mannix will supplement that when he gets up here.

That minority report of the Equity Committee, essentially stated that the increases in State Aid are not large enough and results in a reduction of the growth rate under the present formula. The Minority Report also said that the proposal would fund much less than 50% of regular program funding or spending rather by local governments on public education and in effect they said it places as you would guess too much of a burden on local governments.

They concluded that the tax rates disparities have been reduced to this point by the previous devices to enact Horton versus Mescal but that significant disparities continue to remain. The Board of

Directors of the CCLU has been laboring with the situ, we invited Mike Healthguard to make a presentation which he did at our last meeting. We also heard a minority report presented by George Springer of the Connecticut Federation of Teachers.

The CCLU Board after hearing both viewpoints essentially came down on the side of the minority viewpoint. We essentially adopted the position that the thrust of the Horton versus Mescal decision needs to be fully implemented. We do not believe it has been. In addition, we support the minority report in terms of their view that the proposal provides for insufficient funds to reduce the disparities between the towns in terms of educational needs. Three, we also support the proposition that the whole Tomless section should be removed.

The proposal does represent one or two steps in the direction of equity but we believe, the bottom line is that we believe that ten steps are really needed. The critical question which needs to be asked and addressed concerns whether or not a child in one town receives equal educational opportunities compared to a child in another town and we would submit that the child in the poorer town does not, does not and will not under the bill. For example, Farmington in the last data available from the Department of Education indicates that Farmington spent almost 2/3 more per pupil than the Town of Voluntown. The GTV may have closed that gap but significant disparities still continue to exist and will continue to exist even under this bill.

Last week the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching reported that the movement to improve our schools has "by passed" our urban schools. Carnegie reported and let me quote because I think it's really on point about this critical issue that is before this committee. Carnegie reported last week "no other crises a flood, health epidemic, a garbage strike or even snow removal would be as calmly accepted without full scale emergency intervention".

The issue contained within Bill 539 I think presents the same kind of urgency that is sited by

the Carnegie report. The Equity Committee said that about 60% of state funding was really needed to seriously impact the disparities but the proposals as I understand it and as I interpret it before us is really short of even reaching a 50 - 50 formula five years from now. In terms of the percentage of state aid for local education this bill will keep Connecticut behind most of the rest of the country.

The loss is going to be our children, equity is more than a simple theory it shouldn't be submitted to political considerations as to what is feasible in an election year. The educational health of our children is at stake and I would submit that ultimately the overall health of the State of Connecticut as a result is at stake. Thank you.

REP. COHEN: Representative Ward and then Representative Nystrom.

REP. WARD: Given the CCLU recommended the Minority Report I wonder if you also took the position on whether we fund that with substantial tax increases or if you had recommendations for sizable chunks of the budget that we eliminate. My recollection of the Minority Report and sound equity we're probably talking an increase of over the next three years of an additional \$1 billion in State's funding and I wondered where you felt. . .

Sometimes I guess when I hear rhetoric that what we are doing is being political, when what we are trying to do is balance a budget I think that's part of our job too is to fund everything within the tax and either cut other things from the budget or substantially increase taxes. I don't think we can use the federal system.

WILLIAM OLDS: We're not making a recommendation as to where specifically those cuts should be made or where the money should come from. However, I would submit to you as the Carnegie report suggested if we had an emergency blizzard or health epidemic or something of that nature we would find the money somehow and I would suggest that we when you look at the status of our urban schools and some of the rural schools we're facing that same kind of a crises and we are going to be in that same boat

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five years from now.

REP. WARD: So there isn't really a specific position on how we fund it.

WILLIAM OLDS: I'm not sure we're adopting the specific position that the minority people quoted in terms of where the money should be found.

REP. WARD: I don't think they told us that either. Okay, thank you.

REP. COHEN: Peter.

REP. NYSTROM: Thank you. You made a comment today about the difference in the growth rate over the last several years. Do you recognize that one the growth rate certainly did increase dramatically, one due to the increase in dollars for salaries for teachers and that since that has been achieved and the teachers are now being paid more that perhaps the growth rate need not be as large as it has been since we brought our teachers' salaries up. Now we can address the other needs of our system and at the same time maintain a system that we have put in place.

WILLIAM OLDS: I agree that we may have narrowed the needs to some extent. I just don't think that we've gone sufficiently forward. Increasingly teachers' salaries, I think is a plus and was a commendable step forward but there are other problems such as the ratio of teachers to pupils and other areas like that.

REP. NYSTROM: That was addressed too though.

WILLIAM OLDS: It was addressed, I agree. But I think our position is that it was not adequately addressed in terms of funding adequately. My understanding is that the Board recommended that the equalization spending be increased by something around \$360 million instead of the \$1.170 billion that would be the ideal goal to reach in the fourth or the fifth year. They didn't reach that other figure obviously and they have acknowledged that. Here Mike has acknowledged that before this Committee acknowledged that before my board on pragmatic reasons. I can respect that to some

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degree but I have to come here as others do and try to point out that that's still insufficient.

REP. NYSTROM: Based on the financial picture of Connecticut at this time are you advocating that new sources of revenue be sought?

WILLIAM OLDS: No I'm not in the position where I can recommend where those funds should be found. If somebody were to suggest that there should be an increased sales tax or a property tax that Jonathan Pelger might suggest we're not in the position to make that kind of a recommendation. We don't think that falls into our balley worth. We're simply saying that the state somehow, the state has a number of options as to where those additional funds should be found in . . .

REP. NYSTROM: Such as . . .

WILLIAM OLDS: Well the two or three areas that I've already mentioned and maybe if you got rid of the whole Tomless Law that would obviously free up funds for the needier towns. I recognize in saying that that that's politically very difficult to do as most of you know.

REP. NYSTROM: Thank you.

REP. COHEN: Bill, can I just be sure that I understand. Would you tell me what CCLU's definition of equity is?

WILLIAM OLDS: That's another very complex and very difficult question. I'm not sure I can give you a nice, neat, short answer.

REP. COHEN: Try.

WILLIAM OLDS: Horton versus Mescal didn't in my view adequately articulate that answer either and the courts have not done it. I'm not sure that educational officials do it but essentially it meant that a child of a poor town has equal educational opportunities compared to a child in a wealthier town. Now what does that mean? You know, it may mean that the child in the poorer town who has greater needs has a narrower pupil-teacher ratio to take one of many, many examples that one

can sight.

If we had, if I had a child which suffered from Multiple sclerosis I would submit to you that I would have to spend a lot more money for medical care and other educational needs compared to a child that was well. But nobody would argue that the disparity in spending, the fact that I was spending more money for the ill child compared to the child that was well would be unfair to the well child. I think we're in that same kind of a predicament here.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Other questions? I'm sorry I was out of the room. In terms of Horton-Mescal which is at least the enunciation so far of the highest court in terms of what the constitutional obligation of the State of Connecticut is, in the holding of that case, not the dictum but in the holding of that case you seem to talk about expenditures a great deal in terms of measuring equity my recollection is the holding of the case talks about available tax resources rather than expenditures.

WILLIAM OLDS: I think it really did both. I'm not going to quarrel with that. But I don't think the Education Committee should view and I'm sure you don't, Senator Sullivan view that along narrow lines that have drawn by the State Supreme Court in that case. Equity can be measured in a number of ways and I would be among those who do not believe that the Court adequately addressed or articulated the equity problems that we have here in Connecticut.

SEN. SULLIVAN: I think it's important just as we did on the Equity Committee to remind ourselves from time to time that yes there is probably a definition of equity that we can extrapolate from Horton but your other comment is perfectly to the point. It's beyond that, there are policy issues before us as a legislature that do not constrain us to the simple limits of Horton versus Mescal. On the other hand we also, I think have to remember what the court said and didn't say.

WILLIAM OLDS: I'm among those individuals who must confess that I don't always believe that simply throwing money at a program is going to cure a

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particular problem and I guess the bottom line is that I am among those individuals who would seek greater state control over local spending. I mean simply giving local communities more money may not necessarily always sell the equity issue.

It certainly is a major need but if local communities are absolutely free to use those funds in any way they desire they may not necessarily use it in a fashion that promotes equity and that's why I believe the state needs to monitor and have some oversight that provides sufficient strength to make sure that equity does indeed become a live issue.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Thank you Bill. Ed Dorsett and Terry Kinselia. You are being trusted to do this without Terry or is she here?

ED DORSETT: She's next.

SEN. SULLIVAN: You're not going to do this together?

ED DORSETT: No, we'll do this separately.

SEN. SULLIVAN: All right.

ED DORSETT: But the hard questions Terry gets. My name is Ed Dorsett and I'm the President of the Connecticut Education Association. I'd like to testify on Senate Bill 539. I do have written testimony. I'd just like to take a moment to emphasize a couple of portions of that testimony.

We do support the concepts that are embodied in the new School Foundation Formula. Specifically we endorse the change to wealth by student count, the Foundation concept and the guarantee that no district will receive less aid than the base aide that is listed in the proposal. We do urge some changes though. Changes that would require increases to the total amount of funds to be distributed without reducing the base aid.

We believe that the guaranteed wealth level should be increased to a figure higher than 2 times the town with a median wealth. We believe that the need factor should be adjusted upward either by increasing the wait for AFDC students or the mastery count. And finally we believe that the

four year phase in period might be reduced to bring needed funds to towns more quickly.

I would strongly urge that you adopt changes in the formula during this session of the legislature and not consider any delays. School districts planning their '88-'89-'90 budgets need to be assured of the Equity Committee commitment to fund no less than the GTB and the EEA combined and I would point out to you that almost 120 school districts will be bargaining during the '89-'90 school year and they must know what to project at least a minimum amount as outlined in the base aid.

This committee has a chance to adopt significant changes in the pattern of school finance. We believe that the proposed changes along with the amendments that I have indicated can make a dramatic impact on the funding of education, a dramatic impact. Finally I would point out that CEA is opposed to any measure which would place a cap on educational expenditures. Any proposal which seeks to achieve equality by capping the top would certainly stifle quality. It's an approach this state has rejected for many years and our school systems have improved. We believe that the cap would not represent a step forward. Thank you.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Thank you. You got off easy today. Terry.

TERRY KINSELIA: Good morning, good afternoon. My name is Terry Kinselia. I'm a classroom teacher in Fairfield, a member of the CEA Board of Directors, and an alternate on the Educational Equity Study Committee, a position I have held since 1982.

For many years, the CEA has been concerned that Connecticut does not finance a system which provides equal educational opportunities for all of our children. Therefore, CEA has long supported the concept of substantial increases in state aid, distributed on a basis of need, to correct the inequity among the school districts. These inequities are, as I know you know, a result of the lack of available local fiscal resources, to offer programs of comparable nature and depth in all of our communities, both affluent and the poorer ones.

The formula proposed by the Equity Committee contains many positive changes. First, focusing on wealth per need pupil rather than per capita. Second, guaranteeing that no district will receive less than the GTB and EEA funds in the last year of the EEA program. And, third, setting a foundation as the approach to insure educational spending, rather than relying on the MER, which we know was constantly changing.

We believe that these changes will have an impact, only however, if the amount of money to be distributed by the formula is greater than that proposed. Increasing the total funding would allow the guaranteed wealth level to be raised to a target higher than two times the median. It would allow the foundation level to be raised to a number greater than 4,700 in 1992. It would permit a greater weighting factor to be used as the proxies for need. In other words, the AFDC and (inaudible) count factors could be increased. And, it would allow the phase-in period to be shortened from four to three, or perhaps better yet, even two years.

I realize these changes produce a significant increase in the state's contribution for local education costs. However, we believe the state's share is still too low. Lasting correction of the inequities will occur only when the state crosses the 50/50 sharing threshold and moves to a level where it becomes the major partner.

There are no easy solutions to the problems of reducing the inequities of educational opportunities in our state. Certainly, there is no such thing as a perfect formula, since the dynamics are constantly changing, even as we sit here. There is one truth, however, that all Legislators do have to accept, and that is that the state cannot correct these inequities without treating unequal towns unequally. This, I acknowledge, is a very difficult thing to do.

We urge you to adopt the new formula with the changes suggested, which will increase funding for all and not reduce the projected aid for any. Further, we urge you to resolve the issue of the equity formula this year, now, so that school

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districts and municipalities have an accurate predictor of funding for the '89-'90 school year.

Finally, there is a measure before you which would place some form of, quote, "cap" on educational expenditures. We are clearly opposed to any provision to cap educational expenditures. The whole effort to improve the quality of education would come to a screeching halt, if any cap were imposed. I would suggest that passage of a cap on school expenditures is the quickest route to uniform mediocrity.

Thank you.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Questions? Thank you. Nancy Ciarleglio?

NANCY CIARLEGLIO: My name is Nancy Ciarleglio, and I am the Social Policy Director of the League of Women Voters of Connecticut. We are here today to focus in on some of the points that have been raised by our members from around the state, relative to the impact this formula will have on their towns.

As many of you know, we have been in attendance at most of the Educational Equity meetings, as they progress through wind, rain, snow, and heat. And, we certainly want to applaud the effort being made to study and deliberate this question in a thorough way. Further, we know the financial picture is not one that can necessarily be predicted with accuracy. In some measures, this was the reason for the previous funding package and the GTB not living up to its expectations of equalizing the educational financing in Connecticut.

This new formula, it seems to us, makes great strides in that direction. We do have a serious question, however, about the impact this will have on the mid-sized cities and towns in Connecticut, by using the per capita rather than the per pupil formula; specifically, in those towns which have mixed age levels and mixed housing patterns, which were established in an effort to meet the needs of a broad spectrum of citizens.

They have been somewhat successful in those

medium-sized cities, where many of the people who work in those geographic sub-divisions can also find housing and transportation to meet their needs. These towns and cities would not really reap the benefit the Equity Formula implies. We would suggest that this is an area that needs some adjustment.

The other area with which it seems to us could be addressed, in answer to the focus of all this discussion, Horton versus Mescall, is the funding level time-table. Our research indicates that the funding desired will not be achieved in the short run, if the economic upturn does not continue. And, since this seems to be the one shot education may have at this time of funding adjustment, we would hope that you would fund this at a higher level than proposed, in order to move up the time-table from '92-'93.

Many of the cities and towns across the state have been laboring under the increased educational strain for several years now. The ability to place high school graduates either in the pressed job market or in the college of their choice must be addressed as quickly as possible. These students will pass this way but once. The needs to be addressed are those of the children in school now, and with the added emphasis of national literacy campaigns and the outlook for the job market in the year 2000, this is an investment that should be accelerated, in the view of the League of Women Voters of Connecticut.

Other than the two areas mentioned, we believe that your decision to take the time needed to investigate several types of formulae is to be commended. We can assure you that the Committee worked hard and has produced a fine document. We are sure, all along though, that there was the expectation that some minor adjustments would be made, with the wisdom of the Legislature, and we thank you for the opportunity for us to comment further on this bill.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Questions? Thank you.

NANCY CIARLEGLIO: Thank you.

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SEN. SULLIVAN: John Mannix. You have audio-visual aids?

JOHN MANNIX: Pardon me?

SEN. SULLIVAN: You have audio-visual aids for us?

JOHN MANNIX: To really learn something, you have to (inaudible - not yet at microphone)

SEN. SULLIVAN: Give him a hand there, or else I am going to say that the five minutes is gone, before you sit down, John. That is great.

JOHN MANNIX: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Madame Chairman and distinguished members of the Education Committee. Everybody looks a little sad at this time of the day. We are getting close to lunch.

I want to take just a few moments of your time, first, to try to simplify this formula and what it is doing and offer an alternative.

CLERK: Mr. Chairman, could the gentleman tell us who he is?

JOHN MANNIX: My name is John Mannix.

SEN. SULLIVAN: As surprising as it may be, John, there is someone who does not know.

JOHN MANNIX: My brother is a detective. (laughter) I am a Member of the State Board of Education. However, I am not speaking for the State Board of Education. I voted against the proposal that is before you today. I did spend 10 years in the General Assembly, five years ago.

: (inaudible joking comments - laughter)

JOHN MANNIX: Yes, I am a little bit flaky. (laughter)

SEN. SULLIVAN: We won't hold that against you.

JOHN MANNIX: By the fiscal year 1989, June 30th 1989, we will be spending in this state 760 million dollars for the GTB and the Educational Enhancement

Act, 760 million dollars. Under this proposal, and under my proposal, we are going to hold harmless that 760 million dollars, so let's forget about that. Every town is going to get that, their share that they will be getting in 1989, 760 million dollars from the State of Connecticut.

What are we talking about today? We are talking about 412 million dollars, or whatever you decide you want to add in a four year period, beginning after fiscal year '89. '90, '91, '92 and '93. 412 million dollars. Very simple concept. The question then is how do you distribute 412 million dollars? The reason we are even considering distributing 412 million dollars is because there is a court mandate, to equalize educational opportunity.

What my proposal is here, the alternative proposal, is to work within the 412 million dollars. You can use more money or less money as you will, but basically let's... My figures and charts here are based on the 412 million dollars. Let's go to this chart first, over here.

The bottom line, as Abe Glassman, the Chairman of the State Board of Education said, the MER is the bottom line. That is what is going to equalize education, per pupil expenditures. The minimum expenditure, all right? Under the GTB, because we are using three year old data, three year old data, we are only equalizing to the lowest quartile. In other words, over 75% of the towns are spending more than what we are equalizing to, right now. That is the first graph there, bar graph. We are requiring expenditures at 75...the 75th percentile, but the ogre is that we say: "Use three year old data."

Let's go to the current program that is being presented to you here, the program that is in the bill. They are upping it, and you have, you can look... We have given you supplies of these charts. They are upping it to the 80th percentile. But, once again, they are doing it on a three year old per need pupil basis. What does that mean to the MER? It is down at the same level, the same level as we have now under the GTB. We are not enhancing the requirement to equalize per pupil

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expenditures under either program. We are using three year old data.

Sounds great. We are going to 80%. We are marching forward. We are not marching forward. That is a deception. That is a deception. It is down, still down where that blue line is, where the present MER is, approximately. Representative Langlois, you said: "Are we equalizing?" If we didn't equalize under the GTB, we are not equalizing under this new enhancement, this new proposal.

I submit that we ought to increase it to the 83rd, and use one year old date, and it is equal to about the 60th percentile on the MER. Now, you don't have to stick with that. You can make that the 50th, on a current basis. You can make it the 40th, however you want to juggle this. But, for Heaven's sake, for the sake of the students, let's start moving it up.

In this case that I am presenting, only 40% of the towns will be spending more money. It is very simple. There is no trick here. This is what we ought to be doing, and that is the heart of the whole answer to the court mandate, what you see here, the per pupil expenditures. What's the other problem?

The other problem is the other side of the equation. Who pays for this? How much should the state pay, and how much to each town? I submit that the program that we are suggesting here does this. This is the new...

REP. COHEN: Excuse me, John. Do it in the microphone, only so it will record. Otherwise, we will have no record.

JOHN MANNIX: Better off without a record. This program right here, that you are now considering, 20% of the money will go to the MER and 80% will go to tax relief, can be spent on anything. It may be spent on increasing the MER in the individual towns, but basically, certainly in Bridgeport it won't, and they are now below the minimum MER. They are one of the towns that is below it. They are not even there on an alternate MER.

My proposal, or anybody else's proposal, ought to be increasing the amount of money going to schools. That is the name of the game. By increasing the MER, in my proposal, you are giving 67% of the money to schools, and only 33% to possible tax relief. If you had enlightened people in the town, and the option had enough money, theoretically, they would spend all this money going in, the 412 million dollars, on education. But, you know and I know that under the GTB they didn't do it, and under this plan, they are not going to do it unless it is mandated by the state.

This just shows you a sample, and I have given it in actual figures, if you have these two charts, tables I should say. On these charts, do you see what happens to Hartford? Under the State Board of Education plan, now Hartford has quite a high pupil expenditure. So, most of the money going to be going to Hartford under this plan will go for tax relief. They are already quite high up. They will be close to the MER by 1992-1993.

New Haven is an alternate MER town, meaning that presently they are not even meeting that, so you can see what happens to New Haven. 52% of schools, 48 for tax. If you up the MER, you come 83 and 17, and so forth. Same thing, see Bridgeport, Waterbury, and some towns... I thought there was one. Yes, Granby, for instance, they wouldn't have to spend any of the money coming from the state to increase, to beat the MER, so they are in a position of 100% tax relief. Theoretically, they could increase their MER, of course. Bear that in mind. So, what I am saying is that this is what we are pegging it at.

We also gave you, gave you these tables, and you can look through them. One is the State Board of Education; the other is marked Foundation Plan. And, you can go to your individual towns. Who is going to lose? Somebody has to lose on this proposal. Incidentally, the reason I left.. I made this proposal to the two leaders in the House, the leader in the House and the Minority Leader in the House and the Minority Leader in the Senate, explaining this proposal. And, they said, "Well, where..." and you will say the same thing, "Who

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wins and who loses?" I remember that was quite the comment when I was here for ten years.

The people who really lose, the towns who really lose are the towns who, the wealth.... The towns that are between the 80th percentile in wealth and the towns, between 80th and the 70th percentile, because that is what this plan would do. It would reduce the under-riding by the, by both tax relief and the MER, by about 10 percentiles. You can look through your own town. Bridgeport picks up a substantial amount of money for schools. New Haven, as we have pointed out here. But, some towns, because they have relatively high wealth factor, as per this formula, are not going to be reimbursed for tax relief.

At some point, you have to realize, if you approve this proposal, that you are locking in four more years, actually five years from now, four more years of an MER at the lowest quartile. And, you are also locking in 412 million dollars. You are not going to be able to readjust that 412 million dollars, just as you are not able to readjust the 760 million dollars. You are going to be holding harmless.

I submit that you ought to take your time. I think you ought to increase... You ought to increase the MER. It doesn't have to go to the 60th percentile on the current basis, but you ought to increase it above what we have right now. You are leaving yourself wide open, it seems to me for another challenge. And, you ought to, for the children's sake, the children are the winners and losers in this game. And, I think, for the children's sake, you ought to increase the MER, so that the children, the poorer towns, the children who do not have the towns, they do not have the money to supply the children an equal opportunity financially, they are the ones that are going to be the losers, by keeping the MER low.

Thank you very much, and I will be happy to answer questions, if they are not too difficult.

REP. COHEN: Thank you, John. Representative Nystrom, do you have an easy question?

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REP. NYSTROM: Probably.

REP. COHEN: Go right ahead.

REP. NYSTROM: Thank you. Looking at your chart, and you cite Granby as an example. You said 100% tax relief. Is that reflective of their effort at the present time, that they right now are making a very strong effort to fund education at the local level, and that is the result of why they fit into this formula, that they are not in the position, as you cite, 100% tax relief, 0 for school?

JOHN MANNIX: Well,...

REP. NYSTROM: Is that true?

JOHN MANNIX: Well, to a certain extent, it is true. Granby, when you see 100% has to be projected to be over the MER, so they don't have....but there are poorer towns, so that whatever money they get, their MER is high. Their wealth is low. So, with every money they get, they won't have to put it into the education side. Do you grasp...?

REP. NYSTROM: Yes.

JOHN MANNIX: Incidentally, I should say that these charts are premised on two things, which is my understanding is the same premise on the State Board of Education plan, that there be an annual increase in per pupil expenditures, to maintain current services of about 7%. The towns would have to continue to increase their expenditures, at the rate of 7%, which is what they have been doing across the board. And, that the... for the Foundation Plan, the guarantee of wealth goes up at the rate of about 10%, and that is what it has been doing right along.

Some towns, if you look through these tables, towns are going to lose money under my plan. And, some towns will receive more money, and it is a redistribution, and the ones... for the reason it is, as I mentioned earlier, it is the wealth factor, between the 70th and 80th percentile.

REP. NYSTROM: You also mentioned increasing the MER.

And, you cited that that would provide for the poorer towns, give those children a greater opportunity for education? How does that factor in, when you take a town whose...not to pick on Lisbon, but I believe there tax base is roughly 90% residential. Not to get into the old issue of property tax, but how a town derives their revenue is an important factor here, for the local share.

If you increase the MER, how are we helping that town, when we have not as many state dollars available as we would like?

JOHN MANNIX: I can't speak specifically to Lisbon, but what happens... You have these two factors, and the wealth... We have a definition of wealth now. So, my gut feeling is that Lisbon is not a wealthy town, so Lisbon would fall below both the 80% of wealth as the State Board and the 70th percentile, which I am suggesting reduce... They would fall below that.

So, in effect, Lisbon ought to be... and I assume their MER, they are at or below their MER. So, Lisbon will be getting money to support education if they are below the 25th or the 60th percentile on the current basis. And, you can pick right out. You can compare, and I can do it if you wish. And, on these two tables, you can compare Lisbon with, under both plans.

The new definition of wealth... You see, the ideal thing to do, let me say, to answer the problems with whatever formula you have, whether it is the GTB, the State Board of Education,'s formula, or the formula that I am suggesting or a variation of any of them, the main problem is you are under-funding them. You have under-funded the GTB. You are going to under-fund this State Board of Education formula, and I am using the same amount of money that the State Board is using, and consequently, it is under-funded.

The Equity Committee in the State Board recommended as a goal of a 90/90 formula, 90% wealth and 90% one year old on the MER, which gives you about 80 percentile on the MER. That would be the ideal formula, and I submit that they probably... and I estimate that they probably feel that would be the

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equity, and I would agree with them.

If we were able to... but this costs a lot more money, and if you don't have the money to spend, and I submit there is certainly some problems with that, and you only have 412 million dollars to spend, then you have to look this over and look at the most efficient way to provide equity. And, I think that by increasing the MER, that is the first thing that you ought to do, and the State Board of Education on there plan has not increased the MER. But, you don't have to go to 60% once again, on the current basis. You could go to 50 or 40%. But, please, increase the MER.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Representative Ward?

(cass 5)

REP. WARD: John, I just want to make sure... I am not sure I do understand exactly your change. You are using basically the formula that the Equity Committee for the State Board, or actually the State Board formula, and what specifically do you change in that specific formula to get to your...? Which factors change, and how do they change?

JOHN MANNIX: Okay, Bob, if you remember, they had a cross-hatched, with little boxes. Do you remember that?

REP. WARD: Yes.

JOHN MANNIX: And they had the one side was wealth, and on the top was the MER, I think, or was it vice versa? And, what...all we are doing... You have to look at this like a bar graph. One one side, you have the MER and the other side the wealth. Under the State Board of Education formula, if you read it, it is twice the median of wealth, which is about the 80th percentile, and they are saying 80th percentile, MER, per need pupil, three years old. Now, you look at it. That drops the MER, when you say three years old. That drops it way down from the 80th down to the lowest quartile, whether it is the 20th or 22nd or 23rd.

But, that drops that way down, and you still have the wealth factor up here. So, what happens is: you are guaranteeing, in effect... well, before I

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go into that. That is what their plan is. They have got 25, 80. What I am suggesting is 60, I am talking current basis, 60th percentile for the MER and 71st, somewhere between 70 and 75, about 72, for wealth. So, all we are doing is just changing those boxes that we had, at the Equity Committee. The formula is basically the same, but we are saying do away with three years old and do it on a one year basis, for the MER, current. And, to help pay for that, reduce the wealth factor that you are going to equalize. You are not equalizing to the 80th percentile wealth factor. You are equalizing to, say...roughly around the 70th percentile.

Is that clear?

REP. WARD: I understand what you are saying. I don't know if it is 100% clear. One other question. You started out by saying, in terms of hold harmless, you are holding harmless... It is not really individual towns that are being held harmless under this. What you are saying... is it? Isn't what you are saying...?

JOHN MANNIX: No, my initial statement about hold harmless...

REP. WARD: Yes.

JOHN MANNIX: Yes, we are holding harmless every town. So, I understand it in the formula that roughly 760 million dollars will be the appropriation going out to the towns for these two programs. And, under the State Board of Education program, and I am just changing some of the figures on the this...

REP. WARD: You leave that in place.

JOHN MANNIX: This 760 million dollars will go, will be held harmless and the towns that get \$100,000 and the towns that get 2 million, they will still get that money from the state. And, we are adding on approximately 412 million dollars. And that is what you are trying... Use that 412 to equalize education, number 1, through the MER; and number 2, equalize tax rates, school tax rates. Those are the things. And, that is what the court said.

Horton said, "My child has less money spent on my

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child than in Darien, and yet, I am paying a higher tax rate." See? These are the two factors, and this new formula, without the amounts put in, the percentages, it goes a long way to, a) simplifies it, and b) really let people see how immediately it attacks the problems that are important to (inaudible - coughing)

REP. WARD: Thank you.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Senator Herbst.

SEN. HERBST: I have a couple of questions, both out of curiosity and an immediate comment, in terms of: you keep hearing about the amount of money that they are sending back to the towns. On the State Board of Education, have you ever tried to define what you meant by the educational programs, or have you always included extra-curricular with your educational programs, when you talk about the amounts of money that are to be spent on any given child in any given child?

JOHN MANNIX: I don't understand...

SEN. HERBST: Well, my question is: there are some towns that have swimming pools. They have football teams and soccer teams. And, there are other small towns who have none of that extra-curricular, who do not put that into their Board of Education budget, and consequently, their effort towards education doesn't necessarily represent a true picture when you equate it with the town that is able to offer those children all of those kinds of things beyond the regular school day program.

JOHN MANNIX: I don't know how to... I didn't know that if you had a swimming pool in...

SEN. HERBST: Well, it isn't...

JOHN MANNIX: That that wasn't included in the construction costs of capital construction costs, and that the maintenance cost was not included in the budget. If you look on your profiles document, the old system of per pupil expenditures, not this new one, which does away with transportation and special education... They use the net current expenditure. If you look in that... and that is a

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purified figure, and it explains that figure, and upkeep for a swimming pool is included, I would assume. Not the capital expenses. Capital expenses aren't in there.

SEN. HERBST: So, that would be included in the effort of that town, when you take a look...

JOHN MANNIX: That is right.

SEN. HERBST: At the effort that the town is putting forth.

JOHN MANNIX: That's right. It's an enrichment. If you have a swimming pool...

SEN. HERBST: Correct.

JOHN MANNIX: It is an enrichment program. That is, I assume, a legitimate expense. The local taxpayers appropriated the money, and that is. I don't know how many schools have swimming pools, but...

SEN. HERBST: No, but the reason why I brought that out is because people keep complaining about towns taking educational dollars and not necessarily using them for educational purposes. There are towns who do plug in their Parks and Recreation moneys, that other towns don't even have, you know, don't even have a Park and Recreation Department, so to speak, so there is a question.

The other thing is, inherent in some of your comments, Mr. Mannix, and I am not quite sure if I got the right perception, are you in some way indicating that possibly there is a need for a look at the system of fiscal autonomy for Boards of Educations in the State of Connecticut?

JOHN MANNIX: No. No, I think that that is an advantage of our system, to have the people on the Boards of Education, the local people, make decisions. And, the court said that towns like Wilton and Darien, they have the freedom to make the decisions for the students, what they think is good for the students, and they will appropriate that money. Whereas... well, they would use Canton or some of the poorer towns don't have the freedom to do that, because they don't have the money.

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So, they can't make educational decisions for the benefit of their students, as the wealthier towns do. So, what the court wanted was to provide state money for the student, so that the Board of Education in Bridgeport and New Haven could have freedom to make the same kinds of decisions as the Board of Education in Wilton. And, I believe that the people in Wilton and in Darien are the best suited to make those decisions, not the State Board of Education. We oversee it.

SEN. HERBST: No, I wasn't talking about a State Board of Education. I am sorry if I gave the wrong... I was talking about having fiscal autonomy for local Boards of Education and a school tax as opposed to a town service tax.

JOHN MANNIX: I am sorry. I misunderstood it.

SEN. HERBST: Yes.

JOHN MANNIX: I was on the Wilton Board of Finance for five years, and there was a lot of movement, particularly over in Westport, a neighboring town, to do that. In some states, that is true. My own opinion, I would say that I would probably prefer having a separate tax and a separate decision for education, rather than for the whole town. I think that would be advisable.

In Massachusetts, they have separate tax bills, not tax bills, but right on your tax bill, they point out what is going to education, what the mil rate is for that. They point out what is for other. At least, I am nearly positive they don't have the separate budget-making process, though.

SEN. HERBST: Thank you.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Other questions? Representative Millerick?

REP. MILLERICK: Mr. Mannix, I think if we could simplify this whole situation.... I think what the reason for your minority report, and you have referred to it as the formula... From the State Board, your difference in opinion of how we should arrive at a formula is basically you believe that

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the MER should be raised, and you believe that three year old data should not be used. It should be one year old.

Is that basically the difference in the formulas?

JOHN MANNIX: That is correct. I believe, you are right, that the MER, as proposed by the State Board, is exactly the same, practically exactly the same as the MER on the GTB, and the GTB hasn't narrowed the gap between the affluent and the less affluent towns. And, if we keep the MER low, which is my thesis... If we continue to keep the MER in the lowest quartile, you are never going to have, in my opinion, the opportunity.....

REP. MILLERICK: Well, theoretically. Theoretically, if everyone uses three year old data, then everyone is in the same boat. But you are saying, I think, without putting words in your mouth... I think what you are saying is that if we use one year old data, then the effort of towns on a local basis in the past year will be shown in the formula. Am I correct?

JOHN MANNIX: Yes, I think I understand what you are saying.

REP. MILLERICK: Is that the motivation?

JOHN MANNIX: The line should be what is the difference on the current basis?

REP. MILLERICK: Yes.

JOHN MANNIX: In other words, what is happening...

REP. MILLERICK: Your motivation is to bring it more current.

JOHN MANNIX: Well, yes. More than motivation. I think that we should say that you ought to have an MER on a current basis higher than the lowest quartile. That is all I am saying. You ought to have that... It should be higher than...

REP. MILLERICK: I just wanted to make sure that I understood, because there had been so much discussion about this. Thank you.

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SEN. SULLIVAN: John, can I...? There are some other questions that I have. I happened to be out of the room during some of your testimony. If you have already answered this, I am sorry. I will ask you to answer it again.

JOHN MANNIX: No problem.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Looking down your proposal, compared to the State Board's proposal, can you tell me how many times, North Bradford, for example, that would receive less money under this Foundation Plan, than would receive under the State Board's proposal?

JOHN MANNIX: I think it was....40. Between 30 and 40.

SEN. SULLIVAN: 30 to 40 towns would receive less dollars under the Foundation Plan that you have proposed than under the State Board's proposal.

JOHN MANNIX: Right.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Can you tell me how many towns, under your proposal, would find themselves essentially in the minimum grant hold harm... pure hold harmless category? How many more towns, compared to the State Board's proposal?

JOHN MANNIX: Well, the State Board is about 50. I believe the State Board gave me that figure. It is around 80.

SEN. SULLIVAN: I am sorry?

JOHN MANNIX: About 80 towns.

SEN. SULLIVAN: 80 towns.

JOHN MANNIX: Right.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Representative Nystrom.

JOHN MANNIX: May I just comment on that? The more hold harmless towns you have, it normally would mean the more equity you have, if you are moving up.

SEN. SULLIVAN: In the eye of the beholder.

Representative Nystrom?

REP. NYSTROM: Along the same lines, you have recognized something that when I was a local city official, I always questioned, which is using three year old data versus one year old data, and I would tell you that I agree that we ought to try to be more, or use current data, versus three year old data, because it gave towns the excuse to wait a year, instead of funding their requirements.

But, you mentioned 40 towns would mention.

JOHN MANNIX: (inaudible)

REP. NYSTROM: Oh, is it 40 more, or 40 towns?

JOHN MANNIX: No, total, 40.

REP. NYSTROM: Total 40. 40 additional.

JOHN MANNIX: No town is going to lose... The State Board of Education (inaudible) towns to lose money, because we are holding them harmless. So, we are just repaying how much more these towns get.

REP. NYSTROM: The new increase are new dollars. We would reduce it.

JOHN MANNIX: That is right. 760 is hold harmless, though. We are talking new money. The redistribution of the new money, that is what I am saying, to the towns that fall into the wealth category.

REP. NYSTROM: Does that, do you think that this shows fairness, though? What if a town hasn't been meeting their effort? Now, we are holding them harmless, in essence, across the board, treating everyone equal in that respect. Now, we come in under the Foundation Plan, and... I mean, is it going to treat those towns fairly? The towns that have made the effort? Are they going to be in that pool of losers, versus a town that hadn't made the effort and now they are not, because of the new factors that we have put in the formula?

JOHN MANNIX: Well, in the Foundation, my proposal does not disturb the 760 million dollars.

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REP. NYSTROM: Understood.

JOHN MANNIX: That is the hold harmless. Now, the question is: how do you distribute 412 million dollars?

REP. NYSTROM: Yes.

JOHN MANNIX: I mean... you say the towns will lose. The State Board of Education program, 40 towns will lose money under my program, be the State Board of Education program. But, they didn't have that money to begin with. We are talking de novo here. We are talking a new formula, you know.

We are talking 412 million dollars and how to distribute that. That is what we are talking about, and who gets the money? Who gets the additional money? The poor children, the poorest children in the town, in the state, they are going to get the money. And, the towns that are going to lose it are towns that are just between the 70th and the 80th percentile in wealth. Because, the towns about the 80th percentile, they don't get any money. They are not going to get any, they are not going to get a bit of 1%. Ludicrous, of the 412 million dollars.

The towns above the 80%, they are not going to get anything. And, then, there is a small group where the, where my proposal differs from the State Board for a group of town, (inaudible), fairly substantial wealth. What you are doing is you are holding them harmless. You are bringing it down, and holding them harmless.

But the key: you must keep your eye on the little... It is a shell game here if you are not careful. You must keep your eye on the little ball that rolls around between the shelves. The basic problem is what are we doing per pupil expenditure? That is the key to the whole formula.

REP. NYSTROM: Thank you.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Representative Ward.

REP. WARD: Just a comment. I think that it is mildly

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ironic, though, that Canton under your proposal,
that it goes down substantially,...(inaudible)

JOHN MANNIX: Mr. Horton's son, Barnaby, is no longer
in school there. (laughter) He is in a private
school somewhere. I think he is at Yale.

: He graduated.

JOHN MANNIX: From high school, and is in college, I
think.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Other questions or comments?
Representative Pelto.

REP. PELTO: Mr. Mannix, if I could just ask one very
brief question. Would it be fair to say that what
your argument is is that you should bring up the
last, the end, as fast as you possibly can, even if
it means not addressing what is a relative inequity
in the towns that are not quite down to the end?

So, what you are saying is that we just force that
end up a lot faster, and then we deal with those
middle-sized, middle inequities.

JOHN MANNIX: I think that is fair to say. It is
because of lack of money, and we have to take that
into consideration. I am saying: bring the towns
up from the 25th up, the 30th up to the 60th, and
we are going to...

REP. PELTO: As opposed to bringing everybody up at a
slower rate across the board.

JOHN MANNIX: No, you are not bringing everyone up....

REP. PELTO: No, you are not.

JOHN MANNIX: (inaudible) still down at 25. You are not
bringing anybody up.

REP. PELTO: But the people beyond the mid-point. I
mean, you are talking either about bringing it up
like a see-saw or bringing it up like a steam
shovel.

JOHN MANNIX: No, this proposal... (laughter) No, I
think you misunderstand. This proposal before you

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is a tax relief proposal, basically, in my judgement. And, the proposal I am saying, fine. Let's have some tax relief, but let's, for Heaven's sake, bring up the MER. This proposal has the MER down at the lowest quartile, and that is the name of the game. That is what the spending per pupil, the need per pupil, and I submit that you are...

You know what you are doing? Two things. It is true that you are taking some money away from the towns, between the 70th wealth and the 80th percentile. But, you are also forcing those towns and other towns possibly to increase the MER. See? That is the major thrust, the MER.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Further questions? Thank you, John.

JOHN MANNIX: Thank you very much again.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Dave Cressey?

DAVID CRESSEY: Representative Cohen, Senator Sullivan, Members of the Committee, I am here to speak on behalf of the new school finance program, Raised Committee Bill No. 539. I do that to the extent that I can understand something that is very complicated. I have taken the time to look at the Educational Equity Study Committee Report and the Minority Report, and I still feel that this is the best that we are going to get, and something that is deserving of our support.

Having lived with the current plan, we have learned to live with its glaring inadequacies, its weaknesses, and it is my belief that this plan, the new plan, is better. Many of the problems you know about, some include: in the old plan, the way in which the assessment ratio was allowed to cause wide gyrations year to year in the amount of state aid that was available. This was particularly a problem if you come from a relatively small community, as I do, in northeastern Connecticut.

In fact, speaking to one of the previous speakers, I think that northeastern Connecticut is a wrinkle of the GTB. (laughter) The fact that the GTB has not reduced disparity, and with enhancement, it has only slightly reduced it. The fact that the low spending towns in northeastern Connecticut still

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have the lowest spending towns in the state, northeastern Connecticut, are still among the highest effort rate towns, despite GTB and enhancement, the fact that after almost ten years, where you live in Connecticut still is a factor in one's quality of education, based solely on the ability of the community to pay.

The new formula is far better, in my opinion. It may be flawed, but it is the best that I have seen. It addresses the gyration of the assessment ratio, by making property wealth based on a three year average, thus providing greater stability. Because MER is part of the formula, the nonsense of MER increasing, while the GTB grant decreases, will end. It reduces the tax rate disparity. It drives funds to communities where the children are.

It should reduce the expenditure disparity by allowing towns to meet the target minimum spending level at comparable tax rates. And, very importantly, it continues the support for salary increases funded under the Educational Enhancement Act. I don't know what we will do, come next fall, when Killingly and 124 other districts have to negotiate, if we don't have some sense of where we are going. We really need to know, and we need to know this year.

A revision in the GTB is absolutely necessary to communities like Killingly, because of the extremely low wealth and high tax effort. The foundation formula is as close to a pure formula as we are going to find, because it takes a look at the cost of regular education and eliminates some other items. In places like Killingly, alternate MER has become the expenditure cap, in a reverse way. We must eliminate alternate MER as well, if we are going to begin to address the disparity.

I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

REP. COHEN: Thank you, Dave. Are there questions? Thank you very much. George Springer? I do not see George. Vincent Ferrardino? And, then Albert DePetrillo.

VINCENT FERRANDINO: Good afternoon. My name is Vince

Ferrandino, and I am the Superintendent of Schools in Regional School District 6, which is made up of the towns of Warren, Morris and Goshen in the northwest corner of the state, and I am here also to speak in support of Senate Bill 539. I am a bit of an anomaly here, in that we are among the losers in this particular formulation.

Nonetheless, I do feel there are some aspects of the bill that do require our support. Let me begin by pointing to some of the problems that we face under the current funding from the GTB formula. , Certainly the goal of equity has not been achieved. That has been addressed by several other speakers today.

But, one of our major concerns has been the volatility of the existing formula, and as an example of that... In our particular towns, let me give you a breakdown of some of the changes that we have experienced just over the past two or three years. In the town of Warren, we saw a 100% increase in GTB funds from 1985-1986 to the 1986-1987 school year. From '86 to '87, we saw a decrease of 50%. That is a rather significant fluctuation in funding from the state under this formula.

In the town of Morris, we see an increase of 55%, this year to next year; and in the town of Goshen, an increase of 75%, this year to next year. Now, that makes it very difficult for us to negotiate, certainly very difficult for us to budget. It results in budget increases in the regional school district that range, for example, in current school year: one town faced an increase of almost 25% in their tax bill. Another town in my district actually received a decrease of 5% in their tax effort. So, the... the existing formula certainly has not responded to our needs.

The other portion of the Senate bill that I am supporting is the notion that it does provide the necessary support with regard to the Educational Enhancement Act. A commitment has been made on the Legislature, on this particular issue, and the formula does include that in its package.

And, then, finally, in our case, we are certainly

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very much supportive of the notion of a hold harmless provision. At least it does establish for our towns the ability to establish a baseline from which we can then begin to negotiate and budget for future years.

Thank you very much.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Questions?

REP. BUTTERLY: One question?

SEN. SULLIVAN: Representative Butterly.

REP. BUTTERLY: Yes, thank you, Superintendent. Have you had a chance to discuss the formula with any of the members of the Finance Boards of Goshen or Warren or Morris?

VINCENT FERRANDINO: We have had some discussion on the formula. One of the most significant changes in the case of the regional school district, under the new formula is that the funding will go directly to the new towns, under the new formula, as opposed to coming directly to the regional school district. Under the EEA, funding comes directly to the school district.

Now, what that is going to do, for all regional school districts in this state, is create some difficulty in explaining educating the public as to increases in '89-'90.

REP. BUTTERLY: So, are you, are any of the three towns that you have in that 1% category in the hold harmless?

VINCENT FERRANDINO: We all are. All three towns are. I think, given the existing fiscal environment we are in, and given the definition of wealth, using property, what we are getting out of this bill is probably all we are going to be able to get. I think we all recognize that.

REP. BUTTERLY: All right. Well, I am from your neighboring town of Watertown, so it is nice to see you up here.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Any other questions? Thanks.

Superintendent DePetrillo?

ALBERT DEPETRILLO: Good afternoon. My name is Al DePetrillo. I am the Superintendent of Schools in Plainfield. Plainfield is a small town, also, in northeastern Connecticut. I am here this afternoon to speak in favor of Senate Bill 539. I promise I will keep my remarks brief, and I will try to contain and confine my remarks to how Senate Bill 539 effects our particular school district in northeastern Connecticut.

A little bit of history, perhaps. We feel that for the first time in probably the last ten years of GTB, and EEA, and most particularly EEA, that Plainfield is finally able to make some significant movement toward that equity in educational opportunity, the reason for that being the fact that as late as 1986, when just the only basic foundation support was through GTB... Plainfield was receiving approximately 3.7 million dollars in state aid, under GTB.

Under the proposed legislation, the base year for Plainfield will be just under 7 million dollars, which includes GTB and Enhancement. The bulk of that increase is through Educational Enhancement Act money. And, as a result, it allows Plainfield and many of the towns like Plainfield in at least northeastern Connecticut to not only maintain its current programs to start, but also to start expanding its programs and to make further strides towards equity in education.

We support the proposed legislation, also, because, as has been said previously, we feel it is a much more stable base for state aid to be distributed to the towns, and as the base becomes more stable, it allows local Boards of Education and municipal offices to do better planning, in terms of their budgeting, and hopefully to provide better programming.

We also feel that it is imperative that with GTB and EEA due to expire at the end of the 1989 fiscal year that legislation be passed now, to ensure a continuation of funding, at at least the levels called for in Senate Bill 539. We feel that without this legislation now, local Boards of

Education and local communities would be faced with an intolerable situation, due to the fact that many boards, and I believe it has been mentioned before this morning - approximately 125 Boards of Education are due to enter negotiations for new contracts with teachers in the fall of this year.

Also, it would make it impossible for myself as a Superintendent and the Board of Education to do any type of budgeting for the fiscal '89 school year, without any indication of what a base-line funding pattern might be from the State of Connecticut. For these reasons and for others that have mentioned, that have been mentioned here today, I would just like you to know that we would be in support of Senate Bill 549, and we would urge favorable consideration of same.

Thank you.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Thank you. Any questions? Thank you. Jefferson Prestridge? James Ritchie?

JAMES RITCHIE: My name is James Ritchie, and I am Superintendent of Schools in Plainville, not to be confused with Plainfield, Connecticut, and I am here to speak in support of this bill. My goal is to support the new equity funding formula and to encourage its adoption, during this session.

I think that we all know that the guaranteed tax base has been the primary source of educational funding over the past few years. We all know that the Educational Enhancement Act has funded teacher salary increases, professional development, career incentives and has improved teacher-pupil ratios, during the years '86-'87, through '88-'89. And, we know that the Education Enhancement Act will provide schools in Connecticut with 166 million dollars in funding in 1988-1989 alone, and I think therein lies the crux of my concern.

Right now, Superintendents and Boards of Education are planning their initiatives for '88-'89, and also for '89-'90, and these initiatives are based on certain assumptions. Those assumptions include a focus on local needs. For example, we have to negotiate salaries with our teachers, and I have to sit down in August to do that. It will be

impossible for me to do that in any logical fashion, if I don't know what the funding levels are going to be for '89-'90.

We have to deal with past experiences and events. The programs that we have put into place, during the course of the years of the Educational Enhancement Act will require funds to support them in their continuance, beyond the year 1988-1989, when those funds are expected to diminish. And, finally, we need a reasonably predictable;e future, which includes an expectation that the 166 million dollars in Educational Enhancement Act funds will continue to be provided, and indeed, will increase throughout 1989-1990.

So, my point is that in order for us to do an effective job running the school system and to continue the achievements that we have made over the course of the last few years, we need to have a funding formula in place. The promise of a new funding formula simply will not do. It is important that that new funding and the means of running the towns and financing the towns' endeavors be a reality in the minds of our constituents, if we are ever going to gain their support for the programs that we are trying to put into place.

Thank you.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Thank you. Any questions? Mary Jo Kramer.

MARY JO KRAMER: Senator Sullivan, Representative Cohen, members of the Committee, and those of you who have been here all morning long, I appreciate that you are here. I am the Superintendent of the Windham Public Schools, which is in eastern Connecticut, and that includes the city of Willimantic, and I have been there for two years.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you today, because I consider this probably the most significant legislation in the past ten years in Connecticut, and it is significant because I think it clearly advances equity in the state. And, it is significant in my view because, having worked at the state level, having spent many hours traveling

around the state visiting school systems and working in a wealthier community than the one I am presently working within... and now working in a property-poor community, I consider equity still the most driving force, the most significant question that we have to deal with.

As I listened this morning, I wanted to say to you, as you heard people talk about the MER formula, or the use of mastery tests, the AFD factor in the current formula, the MER, that it is my considered judgement that neither the MER nor the effort of the current formula, nor the use of AFDC is working to the best advantage, and I can answer questions on that.

I continue to see, in my own experiences, a continuing disparity, a gap that continues to widen in our state. I wanted to speak to you not about the need to negotiate or other kinds of managerial concerns, but about the consequences of education in a property-poor town. As everyone would agree, basic skills in the cornerstone of our education, and yet last year, when the master tests came out, we know that our, we knew in Windham, that our students, 6th and 8th grade levels, were performing well below the remedial average.

And although they are making gains, and we are deeply committed to improving their achievement, we recognize that to change, to turn that situation around, we will need massive expenditures for early childhood, for summer school, for academically based latch key programs, for programs for children who are pregnant, for parental training and so forth. Massive expenditures to raise up those levels of basic skills achievement.

The second consequence, I think, has to do with academic enrichment, not the basics, the expanding the horizons idea. I saw a documentary last year on the nature of genius, developing genius, and it noted that there may be children who are geniuses in under-developed nations, but because of happenstance of birth, will never have the opportunity, the environment to nurture their talent. I think that we in the Windhams of the world also have great potential, but their resource, their talent is also being lost, and I

will give you just a brief example.

We recently appropriated for the '88-'89 budget, \$20,000 for musical instruments, and for the simple reason that we cannot expect students to learn to play an instrument when the only time that they have to practice is the time the school, 15 minutes a week or 20 minutes a week, because their parents can't afford it.

The third point had to do with equal opportunity. Less than 15 miles away from the Windham public schools in a contiguous town, is a high school, which has a class size of 15 to 17. The students, all four years, are able to attend classes at UCONN. There is a full-time aide in each class, which translates to more ability for the students to write, more opportunities for the teachers to work with students on writing. There are 137 student activities for a school of 600 and some students.

Compare that to Windham. At our middle school, there are 10 student activities. We have one social worker for the whole school district, to service the whole population. We have no technologically updated computers at the middle and elementary level, and we have an antiquated Basil reading text series.

Now, while we are attending all of those needs in our forth-coming budget, the fact remains, or the question remain: why should that disparity exist? When the distance between the two schools is 15 miles?

I want... a fourth consequence is what I would call goal displacement. In a property poor town, all, almost all of the energy is spent over the managing and the raising of money, and finances takes the predominant roll. And, yet, if we there, in those types of towns, are to attend to quality education, financing has to begin to take more of a back seat. The problem is that we are 167th in Windham, out of 169 towns, and we are 7th in wealth. Compare that to 7th in the state in effort.

Because of the fact that we are on either ends of

the spectrum, the effort, high effort, low wealth, financing, the raising of money becomes all consuming. The tax base simply is not there to support even the most fundamental needs, to which I was referring earlier, much less the kind of quality of education that other children are offered in this state.

Having illustrated some of the educational needs, I would like to present just a snapshot, briefly, of some of the financial problems that we face. The per capita income of many eastern Connecticut towns is comparable to that of one of our poorest states in the nation, Mississippi.

The second point: a mil in Windham generates this year \$226,000. Compare that to Greenwich, where a mil generates 3.2 million dollars. With \$226,000, I can add a few teachers. I can buy some texts. I can meet my fixed costs, if I cut them back and trim them. But, I can't do much else, because with that kind of very high tax effort, more than a mil, more than a mil increase is not what we would favor, understandably so. And, I think that is the point about the unrealized capital gains.

The fact is that you can put 3.2 million dollars' worth of expenditures each year into Greenwich, without raising the mil, and I can only put \$226,000 in, without raising the taxes. And, you can't do anything in education, when you are running a 17, 18 million dollar operation for \$226,000. It just doesn't buy very much.

We have a budget of 14.7 million this current year. Waterford's budget is 16.1 million, and it is just less than 50 minutes away, down the highway, and they have a population of 2,300 students, and we have a population of 3,500. So, I am talking about school districts that are very close to this school district that I represent, and yet, again that disparity exists.

In summary, I have carefully reviewed the proposal, and I would say that while one could debate various aspects of it, it accomplishes what the state constitution demands and simple standards of fairness demand, and that is greater equity in the state. From my experience, I can say that the

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disparity between property-wealthy and property-poor towns is severe. And, as the Superintendent of a property-poor town, I can also say to you that we are dealing with children who may never have gone to school, who have a language other than English, whose pre-school experiences lack a kind of enrichment that enables them to be successful in school. And, it may be that given the limited resources and the extraordinary amount of effort which is required to teach children who are high-risk, we may be doing a better job than communities which have more resources.

And I say, then, in direct response to the argument that the mastery test portion of the formula will result in a negative incentive to keep the scores low, or that it is rewarding failure... The fact remains that all too many of our students are falling below state standards on minimal, basic pre-requisite expectations about what education is needed and required in this state, and that those who are experiencing academic success and opportunity have very limited opportunities to enrich their horizons and expand their horizons.

Thus far, I have just mentioned educational reasons and standards of fairness, and I would like to close on an economic reason for supporting this proposal. Connecticut, as we all know, has a very healthy economy, and as well all know, we need to have a work force that is productive and skillful. There is a researcher by the name of Harold Hodgekinsons, who has recently produced an article which had this in it: "By 1950, 17 workers paid for the benefits of each retiree. By 1992, only 3 workers will pay for those benefits, and one of the three will be minority." The demographics of a large baby boom moving closer to retirement and a smaller cohort to support that retirement means that it is in our collective self-interest to assure that we have a very productive young citizenry.

(cass 6)

In closing, I would like.... I support both the level of funding, and though I would like more, and I share those comments, I also feel the need to have something put forward this year. I support the level of funding, and I support the formula. I

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think it needs to be done for the sake of equity, but I think that it also needs to be done for the sake of the children in eastern Connecticut, who I feel, and I am sure you share, should have the same opportunity for equal and quality education as others in the state.

Thank you, and I would be glad to answer any questions.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Questions from the Committee? Thank you. John Fitzsimmons? Eugene Coppella?

EUGENE COPPELLA: My name is Gene Coppella. I would like to thank the members of the Committee for allowing me the opportunity to offer my sentiments and my backing for Senate Bill 539. I am the Superintendent of Schools in the town of Seymour, one of the lower Naugatuck Valley area districts. I can reiterate what my peer just before me, from the Windham County School District has said, but we have had a long afternoon and a long hearing.

A mil in Seymour, during the 1988-1989 school year also generates \$236,000 as compared to a city of Greenwich that has a 3.1 million. I hear, I heard Representative Cohen asking what is educational equity, which is indeed a very difficult term to define. For the town of Seymour, for their 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students during the coming school year, it will mean no ordering or work books and supplementary materials and supplies.

For the town of Seymour, it will mean that there will be no new equipment purchased, whatsoever, and we lack even more so than the town of Windham the technological machinery that we will find necessary. And, that is in spite of the 3 million dollar increase that we received through Educational Enhancement Act funding. We ranked 159th out of 167 towns in '86-'87, and we do lack many of the materials that are found and taken as a common source of instruction material in many school districts throughout the state.

The town of Seymour's problems are compounded further. We are one of six, I believe, unique communities in the State of Connecticut, that do not have a compatible fiscal year with the state.

Our wonderful fiscal year will begin April 1st, 1988, running through March 31st, 1989. Because of state statutes and local charter mandates, we begin the negotiation process at the latest June 15th of 1988. That is because our budget requests are required to be submitted at Town Hall by December 15.

It will be a disaster, if the Legislature does not have something in place. In spite of all that we have heard, pro and con, about Senate Bill 539 this morning, it is a vehicle for us to plan accordingly, when we are negotiating our salaries for the ensuing school year. I have heard many positive, I have heard many negative comments this morning, for you members, who are members of the Educational Committee, we have a long way to go, to rectify the disparity that exists between Connecticut school districts.

I think Educational Enhancement Act funding has done a great deal for my community, and I am speaking very selfishly, as I am responsible for the educational programming within. If it weren't for teacher-pupil ratio grant moneys, we would not have increased eight staff members in the last three year period. It is for the first time ever that Seymour elementary school children, because of the auspices of this act, will have the benefits of an elementary guidance counselor. The first time ever in school year '87-'88 that we were able to hire a social worker to work with the many problems that we have within a school system.

And to have all of this funding come to an end in school year 1988-1989, without any direction as to where we will be heading in the future poses nothing but disaster, as far as the children and the town of Seymour are concerned. Unlike my peer from Windham, hopefully we are not going to be penalized because our 4th, 6th and 8th grade mastery testing results, the children did quite well. All of the 8th grade students, less than 8% fell below the remedial in math. Less than 2% in reading. Less than 4% in language arts.

Basically, we only have the tools necessary to stress the basics. Children need much more than a basic education, as those entering the schools

today are going to be living most of their lives in a very technological work force of the 21st century.

I thank you for the opportunity to address you. I leave you with the plight that we are one of the unique six communities. We do need some direction. I hope that the Legislature will have something on the state statute, as far as replacement for EEA, and that we will know what this will be, as far as, by the concluding of this current legislative session.

Thank you for your attention. If you do have any questions, I would be glad to answer them.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Any questions? Thanks, good to see you. Rene Racette?

RENE RACETTE: Co-Chairs Sullivan and Cohen and members of the Education Committee, I will try to be merciful by being brief. My name is Rene Racette. I am the Superintendent of the New London Public Schools, and I am here to testify in favor of the bill, not only on behalf of the New London Board of Education who voted to approve the bill and its concept and its inner workings, but also for the Connecticut Association of School Administrators. And, I am urging you to act on that bill during this legislative session.

As you know, the GTB and the MER programs are soon going to be phased out, and we are going to be faced with a situation where towns are going to need to have some information on what you are going to be giving them, in order to be able to find necessary financial direction for 1989-1990. I guess one could argue, and you certainly heard the argument this afternoon, that there is not enough money in the Foundation and in the plan, but I think it is a reasonable step in the right direction, towards heading for that elusive equal educational opportunity, about which you have been speaking, and for which the State Board of Education has a definition.

I am also in favor of weighting the student need through the average daily membership, the AFDC and the mastery test count. Now, 125 school districts

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will be negotiating with different bargaining units next year. The New London Board of Education will be negotiating not only with its teachers, but also with its administrators, not to mention the secretaries and the custodians. Consequently, they, along with the other 124 Boards that are going to be negotiating, are going to need to know from you exactly how much money that they will be getting so that their negotiating can be as effective as possible. And, that is pretty difficult to do, if we don't know what your state portion is going to be.

Therefore, on behalf of the New London Board of Education and on behalf of CASA, I urge you to pass the Senate Bill in this legislative session. I think it is prudent to do so. I also have comments on some other bills, which I will leave for my written testimony, and I would be glad to answer any questions that you may have.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Questions? Representative Cohen?

REP. COHEN: I am interested in your testimony on behalf of CASA, given that at the Equity Committee, the CASA representative voted against the formula. Can you share with us what has happened since then?

RENE RACETTE: Well, what occurred was that a vote was taken among the total membership, and CASA came down in favor of that particular proposal. I will not say to you that as you are experiencing in your own Committee, that (laughter)... that that was problemless and quick. It was a mirror, I think, of what you are going through this afternoon, with a lot of discussion.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Other questions? If not, thanks.

RENE RACETTE: Thank you.

SEN. SULLIVAN: Joseph Grabarz and Daniel Schamas from Bridgeport. I don't know if this is a double team. Okay.

DANIEL SCHAMAS: Thank you, Senator Sullivan, Representative Cohen, Members of the Education Committee. I am Daniel Schamas, Assistant Superintendent of Schools in Bridgeport, in support

of Senate Bill 539, AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL FINANCE and the Equity Study Committee concerning a new school formula, a finance formula.

While the formula proposed under the policy goals of the Equity Committee would have ensured a more equitable distribution of state aid, I understand the political and fiscal constraints we must work under. The recommendations of the Equity Committee, while not perfect, are a major step in the right direction, in getting state aid to those districts most in need and narrowing the expenditure disparity between high and low spending districts.

There are a number of major areas I would like to address. First, there is a need to enact a formula in the 1988 legislative session, so that localities will know that commitments made by the LEA's for salary increases and staff funded through the Education Enhancement Act will continue in some form of state aid. If not action is taken in 1988, municipalities and school districts will have a very difficult time preparing their 1989-1990 budgets.

As an example, Bridgeport will begin bargaining and negotiations with its 1,400 member education association in September. It is critical we know the funding formula for our '89-'90 budget and its subsequent years. After the 1988-1989 school year, Bridgeport will have hired 231 new teachers as a result of the Education Enhancement Act, which permitted us 77 new teachers each year for the past three years, at \$25,000 per teacher.

This resulted in teacher salaries in Bridgeport being very competitive. If there is no provision to pick up this cost in the 1988-1989, 1990 school year, this will create a disaster in Bridgeport. Given the current financial situation of the city, in no way could this cost be transferred to the taxpayer.

Secondly, the foundation level of the formula be set at \$4,800 as the absolute minimum. Next, the legislation should include at least the Equity Commission's proposed appropriation of 850 million dollars for the first year.

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The education need factor is strengthened by adding mastery test as one quarter need, however, some adjustment must be made in the formula so that districts that demonstrate improvement in mastery test scores are not penalized for their success. A hold harmless provision or a factor to reward mastery test growth should be considered.

The new formula will overcome many problems associated with the current MER, especially the difficulty many towns have in meeting the MER because of very low wealth and high concentrations of need for non-educational expenditures. We support legislation that contains a hold harmless provision for every school district in the state, that no city or town receive less than its current GTB Education Enhancement Act grants.

This new formula, with some minor adjustments, will provide vast improvement in school finance and education equity for the city of Bridgeport as well as most of the State of Connecticut. I thank you for the opportunity to address you and solicit your support for Senate Bill 539.

REP. COHEN: Thank you, Daniel. Questions?
Representative Dyson.

REP. DYSON: I just have one question, and it kind of branches off from the formula just a wee bit, and I recognize that you may or may not have the answer, and it more or less is a partisan question that you don't necessarily find yourself in a position of determining policy. That is something that the Board of Ed does.

But, the formula that we have used in previous years, and I think we are presently using, gives to Bridgeport 77 slots to hired each year for new teachers, and I have always been concerned about the compensation of the 77 being employed. Now, when I say composition, it is a buzz word on my part that people around here generally understand, and I am not sure that you might understand it, but the hue of that 77...

DANIEL SCHAMAS: I understand.

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REP. DYSON: Okay, good. (laughter) I want you to know that I am extremely concerned about that.

DANIEL SCHAMAS: We are, too, I might add.

REP. DYSON: Okay, good, because that is a point that I will continually strive to get an answer to, as it relates to just what does that 77 look like each year, or has been looking like.

DANIEL SCHAMAS: We are very sensitive to that issue, and as a matter of fact, have this year stepped up our recruitment efforts, unlike it has ever looked like before in Bridgeport. So, we are very sensitive to that, Representative.

REP. DYSON: Thank you.

DANIEL SCHAMAS: Thank you.

REP. COHEN: Thank you, Daniel. Terry Cassidy?

TERRY CASSIDY: Representative Cohen, Members of the Committee, I am Terry Cassidy, Executive Director of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education. I appreciate your real patience and commitment to listening so long today, and to show my appreciation, I happen to have several of the sticky school finance this year (inaudible - laughter) which you are very welcome to.

REP. COHEN: We were hoping you had dessert.
(laughter)

TERRY CASSIDY: Well, if that will help. I am here to talk to you, as most of the people before me have, about Senate Bill 539, and I also want to make a brief comment about House Bill 5993.

The Senate Bill 539 has four objectives which we believe are basic to the direction CABE believes that we should be going in, and I would like to state what those four objectives are. The first is to continue to move toward a more equitable share for the state of the local cost of public education. The second is to implement a school finance system that is more sensitive to the real needs of towns: urban, rural and suburban - that

have low revenue raising capability, are experiencing the impact of students with extraordinary needs or an increase of student population, within sufficient tax revenues to meet student needs.

Third, to protect all local communities from the withdrawal of state support for teacher salaries boosted by the state EEA program ending in 1988-1989. And, finally, to ensure that each town spend an appropriate amount of money for its children's education.

We know that it is impossible to have a perfect formula. We know that the changes won't hurt. However, CABE is directed by 148 Boards of Education. Those are locally elected people. They are in basic agreement with four specific critical concepts in the formula. Those concepts must be protected in any version of the final bill. I would like to review, very quickly, what those concepts are.

First, action must be taken in this session of the General Assembly. We need to allow budget planning time at both the state and local levels, before the Education Enhancement Grant expires. We need time before 125 of Connecticut school districts enter negotiations this fall to bargain collectively teacher salaries for the 1989-1990 school year.

Second, the level at which the foundation is set is a fundamental issue for us. It is the only guarantee that schools will truly benefit from funding increases, in a program of grants paid to towns and not to school systems. Therefore, we urge that you set the foundation level at no less than the bill provides.

Third, the amount appropriated by the General Assembly to fund a new formula in the first year of the transition must not be substantially less than the approximate 850 million as proposed by the Equity Study Committee. Decreasing the level of appropriation would either require reducing essential local spending on education or increasing the local property tax. This is the only significant tax the state permits local governments to levy, and it is a tax already burdensome enough

to be viewed as oppressive.

Fourth and finally, the hold harmless provision must be enacted, at least at the level provided for in the bill, so that no Connecticut town will experience a reduction in education funding after fiscal year '88-'89. CABE believes that Connecticut's future and the future of its citizens depends upon continued high level of support for local educational programs and employee salaries. We believe that if the Legislature does not act this year, our opportunity to protect that support may be lost.

We urge you to report out Senate Bill 539 and to fight to protect at least the essential elements that I have outlined in my remarks.

Finally, we are opposed to House Bill 5993, AN ACT CONCERNING A CAP ON EDUCATIONAL SPENDING IN CERTAIN TOWNS. We believe the bill sends the wrong message, about the importance of public education. It is likely to decrease public support for our schools, and we can't afford that. And also, it would tend to inhibit creativity in some of our lighthouse school districts, which spend additional money on experimental programs.

Thank you.

REP. COHEN: Thank you. Questions? Thank you very much, Terry. Now the Hamden team of John Carusso, David Shaw and Nancy Beals? They are not here, so we will go now to Devra Baum?

DEVRA BAUM: Representative Cohen, Members of the Committee, it was suggested to me that I show you the pictures of my new grandchild rather than read my testimony. (laughter) However...

REP. COHEN: Not a bad idea, Devra.

DEVRA BAUM: However, I will restrain myself. You have heard the testimony of many people today, people very knowledgeable of the complexities of the School Finance Bill. I won't reiterate what they have said so well. I will only stress the importance of your acting on this proposed bill this year.

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I have been a member of the Vernon Board of Education for 14 years. It is a terrific school system, and our students get a sound education, despite the fact that ceilings and roofs have crumbled at Lake Street School. Windows leak at Maple Street; buckets collect water at Skinner Road; floors buckle at the middle school, and the State Fire Marshall is breathing down our necks.

Why? Because year after year, we were unable to budget properly. We kept strictly educational standards up, while letting maintenance and capital accounts suffer. In our rush to please our town fathers, we never could plan properly for the future. An almost 10 million dollar bond issue and a permanent and costly capital account in our budget will fortunately ease Vernon's problems, but the message is clear.

School systems are like businesses. When they are run less efficiently, they ultimately are more expensive. We must be able to plan carefully so that we don't have to spend more in the future. I ask you to consider the 125 school districts which will negotiate contracts this fall and to consider all of the districts which desperately need to know how much state aid they can expect.

Thank you for your attention.

REP. COHEN: Thank you. Joe Cirasulo? And then it looks like Joseph Wolf.

JOE CIRASULO: As some of you know, I am Chairperson of CASA's Legislative Committee. As Rene Racette told you a few minutes ago, CASA is in support of Senate Bill 539.

I should mention that we went through an interesting process to get to that support level. A great deal of debate, but finally when the vote was taken, I think it was about 2 to 1, in favor of the bill. Included in the majority were a number of Superintendents from districts that are hold harmless districts under the bill.

We see two major reasons for supporting the bill. First of all, it straightens out the whole issue of

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state funding in '89-'90 a year ahead of time, and as many people have said to you before, if we don't get that straightened out a year ahead of time, negotiations and budget development next fall are going to be chaotic. In fact, I think many people will conclude that after putting us up on a certain level with GTB funding and Education Enhancement Act funding, the Legislature would have left us down. So, it is vital that something be enacted this year.

Secondly, the bill, while it is not perfect, does take us on a major step towards financial equity among school districts. For too long in this state, decades and decades, we have lived with a situation where the quality of a student's education has depended upon the wealth of the community in which that student lives. That is a basic fact, and that is a basic element of inequity. While this bill does not correct all of that, it takes us a lot closer, to the point where the product that we get out of the school system is not largely dependent on the wealth of the community.

In education, money does not necessarily guarantee excellence, but one sure way not to have excellence is not to have the financial resources to purchase it. So, we think that 539 should be supported for that reason.

We have a couple of reservations about the bill. We would like to see wealth defined more in terms of personal income than property values. We would like to see a higher funding level set, for two reasons. First of all, more communities would benefit, and secondly, the disparities would be alleviated more so than under the present formula, under the present... I am sorry, not the formula, present formula level or the one being proposed.

But, despite that, we realize we have to be realistic in terms of the amount of money available. Despite those two reservations, we do support the bill and urge you to support it.

REP. COHEN: Thank you, Joe. Questions? Thank you very much. Joseph Wolf?

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JOSEPH WOLF: My name is Joseph Wolf, Assistant Superintendent for the New Haven Public Schools. First, I would like to thank the Committee for giving me the chance to speak on behalf of Senate Bill 539. There is a need to provide for equity in educational opportunity throughout the state.

This bill is the minimum that can go towards meeting this particular goal. There is a need to provide for the regular educated students. The foundation level of \$4,800 and the Educational Equity Committee's recommended level of funding is the least that will be able to come to this particular requirement.

Furthermore, we need to eliminate the alternate MER. The alternate MER has kept us from being able to achieve equity in education. Everyone must have an equal opportunity to learn. It is essential that the MER be moved up as quickly as possible. There have been several different ideas promulgated as to how to move it over the four year period. It is essential that it be moved up as quickly as possible, so that equity does not remain an issue until 1993.

It is essential that this legislation be acted on immediately. Many school districts, New Haven included, will be going to collective bargaining with teachers, administrators and other groups. It is very important that all of the school districts, all of the municipalities understand the level of funding that they can expect in a particular fiscal year.

Finally, I would like to bring out a point that hasn't been brought out yet, and that is the fact that the state soon will be grappling with the issue of de-segregation. I feel that the equity issue here can be the cornerstone of this state's attempt to meet the issue of de-segregation. It is essential, if that program is going to work, that the inner-city schools become desirable to students and to their families, both inside the inner city and in the communities outside of the inner city.

I thank you for the chance to speak.

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REP. COHEN: Thank you very much. Questions? Thank you. John Fitzsimmons? Looks like Michael Milone?

MICHAEL MILONE: Honorable members, my name is Michael Milone, and I am the Chief Financial Officer in the City of New Haven, and I am here to speak in support of proposed Bill 539.

As you know, without your support, the state's Education Enhancement Act is not scheduled to continue after next fiscal year. As presently constituted, the Enhancement Act will provide the City of New Haven with approximately 13.2 million dollars in state aid, next fiscal year. Coupled with the education equalization funds, the state, through these two programs, is allocating approximately 46.7 million dollars in education assistance to the city of New Haven.

The Enhancement Act funds of approximately 13.2 million dollars equate to 10.3 mils. Consequently, this revenue loss would have a devastating effect on our city. This revenue loss would place a tremendous burden on New Haven taxpayers who are presently paying the second highest mil rate in the state. Further, this loss in revenue would have a detrimental effect on our ability to adequately meet the financial needs of our education system.

Finally, this revenue loss would force the city to re-direct additional funds to education and away from such vital services as police and fire and quality of life services, such as parks, public works and libraries. In short, the result of this revenue loss would be service reductions and an increased tax burden.

Proposed Bill No. 539 would consolidate the Education Equalization and Enhancement Acts and ensure financial support to localities. This legislation is critical to our educational programs and our fiscal health, and I would urge your support of this bill, with special attention given to modifying the formula to further increase the allocation to the state's poorer communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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REP. COHEN: Thank you, Michael. And, thank you for hanging in. Are there questions?

REP. DYSON: Do what he says. (laughter)

REP. COHEN: As long as it is all right with you, Representative Dyson. Rose Quezada. Quezada, I am sorry, Rose.

ROSE QUEZADA: Senator Sullivan, Representative Cohen, members of the Committee, my name is Rose Quezada. I am Deputy Superintendent of Schools in the New Haven public schools, and I am here to talk about extending a one-year temporary certificate for out-of-state teachers, which is a current provision in the state certification act.

Part of the problem that we have had in New Haven is that we hire approximately...

: She is on the wrong bill. (comments from Committee members)

ROSE QUEZADA: Oh, I am sorry. You brought me up here for the wrong bill?

REP. COHEN: Well, whoever signed you up sent the note up to sign you up on 539. I will tell you how many, where we are... After 539, we have two more bills before we get to that one, but only about 6 or 7 more speakers.

ROSE QUEZADA: Okay. I have about 20 seconds left in my testimony.

REP. COHEN: I am going to let you do it. Go ahead. If they take away my chairmanship....

ROSE QUEZADA: I am just going to ask again... We hire about, this year we hired about 135 teachers. Each year, we hire about 110 teachers in the New Haven public schools. We are recruiting in 38 states currently.

In order for us to achieve a quality teaching staff in the New Haven public schools, it is imperative that this provision be continued in the legislation. Otherwise, some 60% of the current

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recruited staff, or about 80 teachers who are from out of state, would not be able to teach in the New Haven public schools. It is really critical for us. I think Joe talked a little bit about the whole issue of de-segregation and bringing quality education to inner-city schools, and without this provision, we won't be able to attain either.

Thank you.

REP. COHEN: Thank you very much. We will make sure that your testimony gets filed with the appropriate legislation. Gilbert Walker.

GILBERT WALKER: Good afternoon. My name is Gilbert Walker, III. I am appearing, testifying not on behalf of John Mannix, who most of you may remember me as working for, but I am giving personal testimony.

I am going to talk, quite frankly, about what I see are the serious problems with Senate Bill 539 and with the school finance formula, as proposed by the Equity Study Committee and endorsed in variant form by the State Board of Education. First of all, this plan represents a significant retreat from existing practices. The minimum expenditure requirement under the plan is lower, by somewhere between two and five percent, than would be achieved if the current, 75th percentile pupil, three years old, would be maintained.

We are talking not about even maintaining the current minimum expenditure requirement by reducing it slightly. The Equity Study Committee's discussions and the State Board's deliberations have been somewhat confused by the change in definition in eligible expenditures. In practice, where it seems the simplest analogy, if the MER were left where it is today, the 75th percentile pupil, three years old, and the new definition of expenditures were continued, the MER would be at approximately \$4,875 under the new plan, as opposed to the \$4,800 under the foundation level proposed for implementation.

This is plainly a reduction. It is not a major reduction. It is in the area of 2%, but it cannot be termed a step forward. The key to making any

school finance formula work is the minimum expenditure requirement, and without a significant increase in the minimum expenditure requirement, we cannot expect any significant progress toward equity.

The second point I would like to make deals with the nature of the formula itself. Connecticut has a history of crippled school finance formulas. The first GTB formula was crippled by a cap of additional aid amounting to, I think, never more than about \$100 dollars per pupil. The second GTB formula, the one we are currently operating under, was crippled by its peculiar mix of per capita wealth measures and per pupil (inaudible). In practice, this provided a theoretical high level of wealth equalization. But in practice, each town received only between 20 and 40 percent of the revenue it needed to actually reach a status of full equalization.

The current formula, the formula proposed - the equalized core sharing formula - equalizes wealth in a theoretical way by giving every town the same capacity to finance a demonstrably inadequate level of educational services. If you accept this as genuine equalization when we budget, we may also be required to accept that, for example, the state AFDC program equalizes every family's ability to purchase housing. Because, again, we have an artificially low standard of need which everyone has (inaudible). The kind of formula (coughing) excuse me - before you is the kind of formula a low spending requirement, a moderate to high wealth equalization level that has been tried in many jurisdictions and has almost, in fact I believe without exception, failed to produce any significant progress towards equity. And I think that's the final issue. You really have to say, "Is this the formula that's going to move the state closer to equity?" And I think there is no reason to believe that it will. Thank you.

REP. COHEN: Thank you, Gil. Are there questions? Thank you very much. Joan Wadsworth. For the record, I should say that Joan signed up on the list for House Bill 5993, AN ACT CONCERNING A CAP ON EDUCATION SPENDING IN TOWNS.

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Representative Ireland, also persistent and dedicated.

REP. IRELAND: Thank you very much. Senator Sullivan, Representative Wyman and members of the Education Committee. It's always nice to appear before the Education Committee, regardless how late it is in the day, and I thank you for your patience in listening to all of us as well. SB539

I've been asked to appear before you today by my superintendent of schools and my board of education, and I would like to read a letter which I hope you have a copy of. It's short, sweet, to the point, and then I have a couple more things I'd like to say.

As you consider legislation on the State Board of Education proposed education funding formula, I request that you consider my concerns.

Although the intent of the proposed funding formula is laudable in that it would reduce disparity between the poorer and wealthier school districts, I firmly believe that all citizens of Connecticut have a responsibility to provide quality education for its children, regardless of the town or city they reside in.

This cannot be accomplished by adopting a formula which places too much emphasis on property wealth. It is true that land values in Ridgefield are significantly higher than many other parts of the State, but I and others cannot spend that wealth.

Nor can it be accomplished without taking into consideration the cost of living factor. Having lived in another part of the State for many years, I personally can attest to the fact that there is an evident difference in the cost of living in Ridgefield and I might add, many other Fairfield County towns.

Lastly, tax relief is an important to Ridgefield as its residents' endeavor to provide quality education as it is to other residents of Connecticut.

As Ridgefield's representative, I am constantly

faced with people whose houses have maybe doubled in value in the past couple of years. And these are not necessarily people whose incomes have gone up significantly. They may be people on fixed incomes. And for that reason, we're very concerned when a formula is devised that does not take into account, that puts too much emphasis on property value, because it's like any other investment that you have, whether it be jewelry, or whether it be furs, or whether it be a house, or what have you, it's not really worth anything to you until you sell it.

So as long as you're living in it, you have to try to meet your local property tax situation, and many other things within your community. So for many of my residents whose houses have doubled in value, and you're going to see this throughout the rest of the State in the coming years. Many people are moving into eastern Connecticut. There is a real boom going on in that area. They don't have any more, they don't have as much of a significant portion of their income to use for other services in relation to the way their house value may have gone up.

I know that OPM does not have good data at this point in time, in terms of trying to determine difference in cost of living throughout the State. I know you've heard this argument before, but I'm convinced that it's more important today than you know, I really feel that in a lot of our formulas throughout the State, it's a very important consideration that I hope we can collect the data on because it cuts across the board in terms of programs for the elderly, when we talk about income eligibility levels, that kind of thing. So I ask that you consider that in determining the final formula.

I also would like to speak to House Bill 5993 which is AN ACT CONCERNING A CAP ON EDUCATION SPENDING IN CERTAIN TOWNS. I'm sure that I am what's called one of those certain towns, and I can tell you that probably half the Town of Ridgefield will come to the Capital if that were ever passed, because that's an overflow of local control. We like to be able to think and say how much we would like to spend on education. Some years we'd like