

November 15, 2015

Representative David Sharpe
Vermont House Committee on Education

Dear Representative Sharpe,

On behalf of the Moretown School Board, I write to express our serious concerns about the Act 46 cost containment provision. We believe these provisions serve to aggravate inequities among districts, complicate already difficult budgetary projections, and in some cases create perverse incentives for some districts to spend more than they must or might have otherwise.

Consider the schools in Washington West Supervisory Union. The estimated amount of reductions in education spending necessary to meet FY2017 maximums prior to the imposition of tax penalties are:

Fayston School	\$31,675
Moretown School	\$3,216
Waitsfield School	\$115,083
Warren School	\$50,524
Waterbury-Duxbury Union	\$178,244
Harwood Union Middle/High School	\$800,342

In a year when our budgets need to absorb estimated increases of 7.9% for health insurance, and 7.5% for workers compensation insurance, on top of negotiated teacher salary increases, any attempt by any of our schools — particularly our high school — to budget within the cost containment provisions will result in potentially deep cuts to programs and services.

Moreover, this provision serves as a distraction, and frankly, undue burden and penalty in this first year of Act 46, from the very important work schools across Vermont — WWSU included — are addressing in considering the feasibility of accelerated merger.

Sincerely,



Kathryn O'Neill, Moretown School Board Chair

MORETOWN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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