

Recipient: Vermont State House and Vermont State Senate

Letter: Greetings,

Amend the Education Finance Bill! Create an exception to the "Hold Harmless phase out" for districts that meet or exceed the statewide average for student to teacher ratios.

# Comments

Name	Location	Date	Comment
joseph franz	Westford, VT	2015-04-09	It makes sense
Allison weinhagen	Westford, VT	2015-04-09	Our Westford School and School Board have continuously planned and appropriately budgeted but we're at the point where it's costing us a quality education for our kids. State Government is becoming a hindrance rather than a support in much of this process while pointing the finger at local school boards as the offending parties. We're in this together but local boards cannot change the funding mechanism statewide. Please make this exception noted in the petition and start having some serious and COLLABORATIVE AND INCLUSIVE AND SOLUTIONS-ORIENTED conversations about school funding in the state of Vermont.
Megan Humphries	Westford, VT	2015-04-09	I care about the Westford School.
Patrick Haller	Westford, VT	2015-04-09	Our school has reacted responsibly in managing declining student population and the hold harmless mechanism has helped buffer our tax burden. We hope to level out or even grow in the future. The mechanism has been a valuable tool for us to leverage, while all along we, with our school board representing us well, have been smart and prudent in our budget and staffing levels. We haven't been using the hold harmless clause as a crutch.
India Tresselt	Westford, VT	2015-04-09	I no longer have children in the Westford School, but I am a taxpayer caught between my citizen's duty to provide the best possible education for all our children, and the constraints and hardship of ever-rising taxes to pay for that education. Please create the "hold harmless" exception as outlined in this petition.
Erik Johnson	Saratoga Springs, NY	2015-04-09	I will not be able to afford to live in Westford much longer but it is a great town.
Cathy Gwozdz	Colchester, VT	2015-04-09	Westford has a great school and we need to be able to keep supporting it without having to give up part of our personal needs to afford the school taxes. I can't imagine how our elders pay their taxes with a social security check. I don't know how a family can pay their school taxes without dipping into grocery funds to purchase fresh local food for their table. Westford needs help and we are reaching out to Montpelier. Please hear our call.
Gordon Hill	Colchester, VT	2015-04-09	My taxes are forcing me to move out of state
Richard Flynn	underhill, VT	2015-04-09	Taxes are out pacing my income in my retirement.
Richard Ketcham	Westford, VT	2015-04-09	property taxes in Westford are above the state normal distribution and have experienced increases that are not sustainable without with out causing extreme hardship
Karen Needler	Westford, VT	2015-04-10	Taxes are too high, and there is no more room for cuts.
Rosemary Shea-Cobb	Randolph, VT	2015-04-10	Please create this exception and recognize the hard work and hours that communities like Westford have diligently applied to being responsible to the statewide education funding picture.
Mike Olsen	Westford, VT	2015-04-10	I am signing this petition because the system is broken and something needs to be done to fix it.
Anne Cummings	Westford, VT	2015-04-10	I am an educator and have observed that despite the best intentions of Act 60 and 68, there is not really equity in education, and the cost has been shifted to communities that cannot afford it. I am a firm supporter of education and would rather pay for schools than prisons or the military, but when enrollments go down and costs are cut, how can taxes continue to rise?

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Dianne Smith	Westford, VT	2015-04-11	I'd like to be able to afford remaining in Westford. I also support the Westford School and believe the children here deserve a local excellent education.
Marilyn McConnell	Westford, VT	2015-04-11	It's essential for the identity of communities like ours that we keep our elementary school open!
Mark Drapa	Westford, VT	2015-04-12	What are the unintended consequences of numerous, disjoint legislative actions? Act 153/156, the excess spending threshold, mandated consolidation, spending caps, universal preK, elimination of the hold harmless provision, no small school grants...will we be able to preserve our community's educational values with so much turmoil from the top?
Edward Lalonde	Westford, VT	2015-04-12	this school financing sceme is a fasre. It has not created equal education opportunities. When a community like Westford cuts the school budget every year yet the tax crate continues to rise for the town something is wrong. And it is really wrong that educational opportunities are being cut in Westford to subsidize neighboring communities that don't have to cut their kids opportunities and may in fact have expanded them. Fix this train wreck before people start voting your democratic majority out of office.
Beth Peloquin	Westford, VT	2015-04-12	I support the school every year at town meeting, but I cringe at the fact that the school board continually has to cut in order to run in place.
Sandra Keener	Westford, VT	2015-04-13	I believe in sustaining quality public education and that this is currently at stake in our community.
Scott Cooledge	Westford, VT	2015-04-13	Tax payers supporting schools who have right sized staff are still being penalized with resulting high taxes
andre roy	Westford, VT	2015-04-14	I am signing as a statement that the current financing of ours schools needs to be less dependent and reliant on property taxes. consolidation is not the answer in addressing educational costs. I am optimistic that this petition will be a start in resolving how education is going to be funded and provide for a vehicle to start the discussion in resolving this issue once and for all.
Carol Winfield	Highgate Center, VT	2015-04-16	our school is great, we are very happy with it, and should not have to go broke with higher taxes to pay for it. we pay too much already, can't pay mortgage and taxes and food!
justin schwartz	Westford, VT	2015-04-16	I'm signing because the unsustainable tax increases are forcing people my age (25-35) to leave. I want nothing more than to raise my children here but if taxes continue to rise I will have no choice but to leave.
Patricia Babcock	Westford, VT	2015-04-17	I can no longer afford my property taxes. Another increase in our property taxes will force me to move from my home.
Michael Romp	Westford, VT	2015-04-19	Fairness