

**CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY
JOINT APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY**

RE: NEW HAVEN AND HAMDEN KIDS NEED FULLY FUNDED SCHOOLS

February 13, 2020

Alexander Tiva Taubes

New Haven, Connecticut

Dear representatives and senators,

I am a resident of New Haven, Connecticut, and am writing because of my concern regarding school funding in the Elementary and Secondary Budgets of the upcoming budget proposal for this legislative session.

I am gravely concerned with the proposed budget for public education proposed by Governor Lamont. It perpetuates the continued underfunding of public education and its profound negative impact on our children's futures.

Current education funding fails to take into account the real costs of education in communities with high concentrations of poverty, English learners, and which face particular challenges funding special education. The cost study completed by the Connecticut Coalition for Justice in Education Funding in 2005 and updated in 2014 shows that our public schools are dramatically underfunded. (Full disclosure: I was previously counsel for the Coalition in its case challenging Connecticut's funding system as unconstitutional, but I submit this testimony solely on my own behalf.)

Governor Lamont's proposed budget includes a below-inflation education funding increase for New Haven, or – in real terms – an education cut. Once again, the budget proposes to “phase in” over 10 years an education formula that should be implemented this year.

The increases proposed in this budget are unacceptable. The proposed underfunding of urban schools will continue to force urban school districts to make impossible choices that fail to serve students' needs.

I am calling on legislative leaders – ***especially State Senator Martin Looney, my state senator*** – to right this wrong and approve a fully-funded education budget this year.

I want to thank the New Haven Public School Advocates for bringing this hearing to my attention. I wish to incorporate their testimony, with additional suggestions regarding full education funding and programming, into my testimony by reference.

We know what it will take to provide our children with an excellent, equitable education. We just need the political will. I respectfully request that you do what it takes.

Respectfully submitted,

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