

February 22, 2021

Subject: Testimony against cuts to Project Longevity in HB-6439 budget bill

Senator Osten, Representative Walker, ranking members Miner and France and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Ross Tartell. I am from Wilton, CT. I am on the Wilton Board of Selectmen, although I am submitting this testimony as a private citizen.

I am submitting testimony in opposition to the \$50K cut to Project Longevity as included in the Governor's proposed budget. I ask you to fully fund the program as it was passed in the FY 2020-2021 biennium budget.

Gun violence takes an enormous human and financial toll on society. Many of those costs are hidden. When Wilton significantly renovated its elementary schools, they adjusted the footprint of the school to create defensible site lines and protected play areas. Those and other security based architectural changes did not come cheaply.

We must do everything we can to minimize the carnage and costs due to gun violence. That is why I'm also asking you to support a state-level grant-making authority with dedicated funding along the lines proposed by CT Against Gun Violence.

I support more funding for gun violence prevention programs, and urge you to fully fund the Office of Policy and Management budget for Project Longevity. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ross Tartell
Wilton, CT 06897