

(PH)7.H.B. No. 6450(Comm) An Act Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations Concerning Public Health.

Public Health CommitteePUBLIC HEARING AGENDAWednesday, March 3, 2021

I am writing as a Farmington Valley Health District board member representing the Town of Granby. The District includes the towns of Avon, Barkhamsted, Canton, Colebrook, East Granby, Farmington, Granby, Hartland, New Hartford, and Simsbury.

This past year has shown the need for a strong Department of Public Health at the State level to ensure that the partnership with the local health districts is strong and properly funded at all levels. **But the local District is where the key action is right now.**

As most of you may know the support for the local Health District operation and services comes from the member towns, fees for inspections and regulatory services paid by the business and citizens who need them, and some State funding to support the District unit.

The State funding for local health districts has been at a dismal level for most of the last 22 years that I have been watching. The **per capita funding** in 1998 was \$1.79, in 2007- \$2.08, in 2009 - \$1.85, but since 2015 to present - \$1.76 has been the rate. The proposed \$1.85 would be an increase, but it does not make up for the many years of austere budgets

The past few years leading up to this year's Pandemic the staff of the FVHD has been engaged in preparing for the District to become accredited in addition to working in the communities tracking and tracing cases of the vaccine preventable diseases, educating residents and students on the dangers of the opioid epidemic, and supporting the Men's Health Initiative to fight for better mental health for the veterans in the towns. ***The Health District's role in disease prevention is an "investment" in our community that saves lives and future health care costs.***

The staff is also expected to carry out the many mandates that come each year; to track the effect of lead in the school children when identified; make sure that the vaccination records are up to date; inspecting the nail and hair salons, inspecting the food services kitchens in restaurants, nursing homes, schools, senior centers, churches, and special summer farm-to-table events. They keep us advised on the safety of the drinking water, swimming places. Other standard activities of the District include permitting and inspecting wells, septic and sewer systems for new construction and housing.

In order to perform the many types of services that are necessary to ensure our health in the community, it is imperative that the State through the State Department of Public Health budget be funded to give enough money to go to the Local Health Districts who are serving on the front line of trying to manage this pandemic.

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Per Capita funding	1998	\$1.79	
	2000	1.99	
	2003	1.66	
	2007	2.08	
	2009	1.85	
	2015	1.76	same to date

March 5, 2021