

SPEAKING POINTS: NO TAX ON TEACHERS

- Teachers stand together, unequivocally opposed to a teacher tax. It will not help balance the state budget and can and must be eliminated.
- This tax on teachers in the latest budget proposal announced on Oct. 18, is expected to be voted on next week.
- It is a slap in the face to the 55,000 passionate, caring teachers across the state who have dedicated their lives to teaching students.
- Legislators must keep their promise to teachers.
- Teachers have fully funded their fair share of teacher retirement for decades and should not be punished for the state's mistakes.
- Teachers must not be punished with an increase in their payroll tax when the payment they have made for decades has fully funded their fair share.
- Teachers pay six percent of their salary into the pension fund. The state's contribution is 4.56 percent and together would pay the full costs of teacher retirement.
- Over the years, the state has not fully funded the plan or paid its share of the cost.
- The cost of the unfunded liability—due to underfunding of the state's portion—should be the responsibility of the party at fault; the state, not teachers.
- By comparison, state managers, commissioners, and those earning far more than teachers have for many years contributed ONLY two percent of their salary to their retirement.
- Legislators must respect the contributions teachers make to Connecticut's children and the future of our state and not punish us for the state's mistakes.
- We want a fair budget that works for all of us, invests in public education, and does not unfairly punish teachers with an unnecessary and burdensome tax.

TEACHERS ARE AGAINST OTHER BAD PROPOSALS

Teachers also oppose two other proposals that would balance the state budget on the backs of students and teachers—shifting state costs for teacher retirement plans onto local communities, and cutting much-needed education funding from our schools.

COST SHIFT

- Shifting the cost for teacher retirement from the state to cities and towns is a misguided and destructive proposal, and we are unequivocally opposed to it.
- The proposal—to charge cities and towns many millions of dollars for a responsibility the state assumed decades ago—will result in property tax increases, school budget cuts, or both.
- If the governor wants revenue from wealthy taxpayers in wealthy communities to help balance the budget there are more efficient and targeted ways of accomplishing that goal.

ECS FUNDING CUTS

- Teachers oppose a 'behind closed doors' process to create a new ECS formula, without input from educators and objective experts in fiscal policy—an approach that has contributed to our present ECS problems.
- Rather than invite a new *CCJEF* lawsuit, a transparent and nonpartisan process to create a new ECS formula is in order.

Teachers recognize the challenges state legislators face in balancing the budget, but we cannot continue to shortchange students, their futures, and the future of our state.

We need a responsible budget that invests in public education, keeps the state's promise to teacher retirement without a cost shift to cities and towns, and does not impose a punishing tax on teachers.