

# State of Connecticut

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY



HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

March 6, 2017

Governor Dannel P. Malloy  
Office of the Governor  
210 Capitol Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

This year is an extremely challenging year in which to craft a state budget. Connecticut is facing significant budget shortfalls as a result of past policies that have put our state into an economic tailspin. While the budget process is of course complex, we believe we need to do everything in our power to move the state's budget writing process along with urgency so that we can give municipalities the information they need to plan for their futures.

You reached out to us asking if we would sign a letter about adjusting state statutes to allow towns and cities to push out the dates by which they plan to adopt their local budgets. As similar proposals were discussed in our meeting with you and legislative leaders on Wednesday, we believe such an approach is self-serving and not a realistic way to solve the problem of municipalities needing accurate information as they formulate their own budgets. First and foremost, such a change would allow state statute to supersede municipal charters, which are protected under current state law. If the state moves forward with this, it raises the question of whether the state could supersede local charters on other issues. Such a change also gives the legislature an excuse to drag its feet when we need to be moving forward. Rather than asking 169 towns and cities with various unique situations to change their schedules, we believe lawmakers at the Capitol need to make a commitment to do our jobs and focus our full attention on solidifying a budget together as soon as possible. We should not be pushing a timeline onto towns, we should be working harder to better meet the needs of our towns.

For legislators to ask the 169 municipalities in our state to revise their budget schedules because state lawmakers are facing difficult challenges is tone-deaf to the realities municipalities face on a daily basis. It's very difficult to fully understand all the ramifications of asking municipalities to change their schedules. Asking municipalities to change their timelines once again puts the onus on towns and cities to cater to the legislature, and shows a lack of willingness from those in the Capitol to buckle down and focus on what has to be done on our end.

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Our towns have always asked us for one thing above all else: the information they need to plan accordingly. Not having a balanced budget at the start of the fiscal year is not acceptable for towns. Neither is getting hit with mid-year budget cuts as towns and cities have had to struggle through over the past few years. If the concern is truly to help municipalities, why aren't we talking about a way to restore the December education cuts that our towns and cities are right now struggling to absorb? Republicans are still waiting to hear back from Democrats about working together on this comparatively small task. And if you recognize the need for the legislature to work more quickly, where is your support for proposals made year after year by Republicans to move up the legislature's deadline for providing final budget information to cities and towns?

You have made it clear that you understand your proposed municipal aid changes will be altered by the legislature. Our towns and cities deserve to know what those alterations will be in a timely manner. We are committed to putting in the time and the effort necessary to get this job done. Rather than spending time trying to negotiate acceptable language for changes to local charters, we believe our towns and cities would be better served if that time was dedicated to working on the budget together so that towns and cities could more quickly get the answers that they count on every year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Len Fasano', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Len Fasano  
Senate Republican President Pro Tempore

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Themis', written in a cursive style.

Themis Klarides  
House Republican Leader

cc: Senate President Pro Tempore Martin M. Looney, Speaker of the House Joseph Aresimowicz, State Senator Bob Duff, and State Representative Matthew Ritter