

The Real Story on State Aid in 2008

October 10, 2008

My opponent recently sent out a postcard that casts aspersions about my record. I am writing to set the record straight.

I voted with the majority of my colleagues to increase state aid dramatically in 2007 and 2008, which yielded nearly \$2 million in additional state aid for Lincoln, Sudbury, and Wayland, an increase of 15%. In comparison, my opponent's record on state aid in the previous five years (2002-2006) shows a meager \$2,177 annual increase (0%) in state aid for Lincoln and a loss of over \$14,000 in state aid each year for Wayland.

Here's the real story on state aid in 2008. In January 2008, as required by law, the Governor submitted a balanced budget with a proposed 3% increase in state aid. In February, I appealed in writing and in person to House of Representatives leadership to increase state aid further. In March, the Governor and both chambers of the legislature - at the request of towns and cities across the state who wanted an early and final agreement on state aid so that they could plan local budgets accordingly - agreed to a 4.4% increase in state aid, amounting to \$233 million, and bringing total state aid to over \$5 billion. I voted for this resolution, which meant a 6% increase for Lincoln, Sudbury, and Wayland.

In April, Republicans offered a series of budget-busting amendments that proposed to alter this agreement by taking \$450 million from the stabilization or "rainy day" fund, and allocate it to state aid.

I voted against the Republican amendments for several reasons.

- (1) There was no accompanying proposal to replace the \$450 million. As such, the amendments were fiscally irresponsible. In light of our current economic crisis, we should all be thankful today that we didn't approve this reckless scheme six months ago.
- (2) Removing \$450 million from the stabilization fund would have imperiled the state's credit rating, causing our borrowing costs to increase, furthering the fiscal irresponsibility, and imposing more pain on taxpayers.
- (3) The agreed-upon state aid increase of 4.4% represented the biggest line item increase in the entire state budget, with the exception of Medicaid.
- (4) The Republicans - fully recognizing that the amendments would not pass -demanded roll call (rather than voice) votes to put Democrats on record as voting against state aid increases. As such, the scheme was widely recognized as a partisan maneuver designed to allow future Republican candidates the ability to mislead voters about Democrats come campaign season.