

## House Republican Press Release

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### REP. FREY PROPOSES EDUCATION FUNDING FIX



State Representative John Frey, R-111th District has introduced a bill this session to repair our broken State Education Cost Sharing (ECS) Formula by removing the cap on grants. House Bill 5868 has been referred to the General Assembly's Education Committee.

Rep. Frey's proposal is to remove the cap on ECS grants awarded to towns. Currently, some towns are capped as to how much education funding the state appropriates due.

The ECS formula was enacted in 1988 to take effect on July 1, 1989. It was to be phased in over four years and be fully implemented in FY 94. In 1995, the General Assembly completely revamped the formula, merging a formerly separate special education grant with ECS. ECS grants for 1995 and after are thus not comparable to those for previous years.

The ECS cap was first enacted in 1992. The cap limits towns' annual increases in ECS aid regardless of their grant entitlements under the ECS formula. For several years, the cap had its own formula tied to town wealth. But for the past three years, the legislature has capped the growth of the ECS grant by establishing a set increase for all towns based on the amount received in a previous year.

Ridgefield is considered a capped town according to the ECS formula. As a capped town, Ridgefield received \$606,860 less or only 69.5% funding of what the ECS statutory formula permits for fiscal year 2007.

"The Majority party for years has said they would fix the ECS formula; they have not," said Rep. Frey. "My bill tries to address the inadequacies and inequalities in Connecticut's education funding mechanism that forces small suburban towns to shoulder this burden. Ridgefielders should have the same opportunity to an education as any other town or city. All students in the state deserve a quality education," added Rep. Frey.

"Ridgefield should not be penalized for or capped below statutory levels due to its status as one of Connecticut's wealthier towns. Ridgefielders still struggle paying property taxes and capping our ECS funding forces Ridgefield to make difficult decisions each year. My bill is a proposal to level the playing field so Ridgefield and other capped towns can receive their fair share in state education dollars," added Rep. Frey.