

House Republican Press Release

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Reps D'Amelio, Noujaim Support Measure to Postpone In-School Suspension Mandate



Majority Democrats Kill Proposal that Would Have Saved Local Taxpayers Millions

A measure that would have postponed a state mandate that requires suspended students to serve their suspensions in school rather than out of school and saved local taxpayers millions was killed Monday by majority

Democrats in the state House of Representatives, state Representatives Selim Noujaim and Anthony J. D'Amelio said today.

The proposal, a House Republican amendment to a bill authorizing various relief measures for municipalities, would have postponed the in-school suspension mandate until July 1, 2012. The measure was offered during Monday's Special Session of the Connecticut General Assembly.

Under a recent state law (Public Act 07-66), most students who are suspended from school must serve their suspensions in school rather than out of school. The mandate, which takes effect July 1, 2009, is expected to cost municipalities an additional \$80 million in 2008 and \$100 million more in 2009.

"Waterbury school administrators, who strongly oppose this new state mandate, say it will add significant costs to the city's education budget – money that is simply not there," said Representative Noujaim, R-74th District. "The requirement forces Waterbury schools to provide rooms where suspended students can serve their suspensions and teachers to supervise them, which could add millions in unanticipated costs to Waterbury's education budget. At a time when Waterbury and other cities across the state desperately need relief, it is beyond belief that the state legislature's majority party could have rejected a common sense proposal like this."

"With our state's economy already in a slump that is expected to get worse in the months ahead, overburdened taxpayers in Waterbury and Middlebury cannot afford this mandate," said Representative D'Amelio, R-71st District. "We convened in special session today to provide relief to municipalities and to eliminate the state's projected deficit of more than \$300 million for the current fiscal year. Our proposal to postpone in-school suspensions until 2012 was offered in a bi-partisan spirit to help our cities and towns cope with sharply-rising costs and revenue losses. At a time when families across the state are struggling to keep their homes warm, feed their families and pay their mortgages, it's unbelievable to me that the majority Democrats would have blocked a

proposal that would have helped our cities and towns get through a deepening recession without raising property taxes.”