



## OFFICE OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN

**Michael R. Criss**  
**First Selectman, Town of Harwinton**

### ***EDUCATION COMMITTEE***

March 3, 2021

Good Afternoon, my name is Michael R. Criss, I am the First Selectman for the Town of Harwinton and I am submitting testimony regarding S.B. 947 "An Act Establishing a Working Group to Review the Effects of The Education Cost Sharing Grant Formula on Small and Rural Towns."

#### **SB 947 "An Act Establishing A Working Group To Review The Effects Of The Education Cost Sharing Grant Formula On Small And Rural Towns"**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and submit testimony on proposed S.B. 947 "An Act Establishing a Working Group to Review the Effects of The Education Cost Sharing Grant Formula on Small and Rural Towns." The Town of Harwinton is in favor of this proposed bill as submitted.

Establishing a working group to review the effects of the ECS formula on small rural towns will be a big step in the right direction. Small rural communities have long been victims of funding cuts. By establishing a working group, we would be able to further discuss the partnership between the state, the municipalities and the federal government on providing the best education we can and funding it properly for our children's success.

As most of us know the ECS formula has been modified numerous times by the General Assembly which in most cases significantly limited its effectiveness as well as impacting funding in various ways. Furthermore, the formula has never truly been funded nor implemented as designed. Although the state has come up with a plan to phase in to fully funding ECS by 2028, I am hesitant on the commitment of the legislator to fully fund the grant. I am well aware and fully understand that there may be limitations. However, we cannot explore these limitations or the commitment to fully fund until we work together by forming the small and rural town ECS working group.

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I believe this working group not only will be essential to ensure adequate and equitable funding for small towns, but it will be essential in ensuring the success of our children.

In addition, any working group that is formed should include all stakeholders not limited to just small and rural representation but also representatives from CCM & COST. Therefore, I and the Town of Harwinton urge the committee to support S. B. 947 and to include all stakeholders.

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony on behalf of the Town of Harwinton. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at any time.

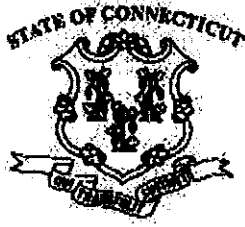
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General Assembly

January Session, 2021

**Raised Bill No. 947**

LCO No. 3962



Referred to Committee on EDUCATION

Introduced by:  
(ED)

**AN ACT ESTABLISHING A WORKING GROUP TO REVIEW THE EFFECTS OF THE EDUCATION COST SHARING GRANT FORMULA ON SMALL AND RURAL TOWNS.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a working  
2 group to study the effects of the equalization aid grant formula, as  
3 described in section 10-262h of the general statutes, on small towns and  
4 rural towns. The working group shall review such formula and consider  
5 the following: (1) The effect of such formula on the distribution of state  
6 education funds to (A) small towns, and (B) rural towns, and (2) the  
7 effect of the phase-in of funding levels, as described in subsection (c) of  
8 section 10-262h of the general statutes, on the predictability and  
9 sustainability of education funding for small towns and rural towns.

10 (b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

11 (1) Two designated by the Connecticut Association of Boards of  
12 Education, one of whom is a member of a board of education for a school  
13 district for a small town and one of whom is a member of a board of  
14 education for a school district for a rural town;

15 (2) Two designated by the Connecticut Association of Public School  
16 Superintendents, one of whom is a superintendent of school for a school  
17 district for a small town and one of whom is a superintendent of schools  
18 for a school district for a rural town;

19 (3) Two designated by the Connecticut Education Association, one of  
20 whom is a teacher in a school district for a small town and one of whom  
21 is a teacher in a school district for a rural town;

22 (4) Two designated by the American Federation of Teachers-  
23 Connecticut, one of whom is a teacher in a school district for a small  
24 town and one of whom is a teacher in a school district for a rural town;

25 (5) Two designated by the Connecticut Council of Small Towns; and

26 (6) The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee.

27 (c) All designations to the working group shall be made not later than  
28 thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall be  
29 filled by the designating authority.

30 (d) The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee,  
31 shall serve as the chairperson of the working group. The chairperson  
32 shall schedule the first meeting of the working group, which shall be  
33 held not later than sixty days after the effective date of this section.

34 (e) Not later than January 1, 2022, the working group shall submit a  
35 report on its findings and any recommendations for revisions to the  
36 equalization aid grant formula to the joint standing committee of the  
37 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education,  
38 in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.  
39 The working group shall terminate on the date that it submits such  
40 report or January 1, 2022, whichever is later.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
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**Statement of Purpose:**

To establish a working group to review the effects of the education cost sharing formula on small and rural towns.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*