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Letter: Finance Board Chairman Zagrodzky: Malloy's Pension Proposal Could Cost Darien \$3 Million

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To the editor:

The recent announcement by Governor Malloy that he will ask to shift more than \$400 million in teacher pension obligations to Connecticut towns should be alarming to everyone. The Board of Finance is certainly concerned, and while none of this is final, we do have an estimate of the potential impact.

An analysis by the town's finance team suggests that we could be facing a bill of \$3 million, a figure that takes into account Darien's share of prior-year state contributions.

This assumes, of course, that we do not end up paying more in the spirit of "fairness." Keep in mind also that this assessment would likely continue each year going forward, and that it could become substantially

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larger — all for pension benefits we had no voice in negotiating.

Connecticut has enormous problems with unfunded commitments. I am not against assessments like this or higher taxes to help solve these problems *per se*. My problem is that all too frequently, such fixes are diverted to other purposes. Beware [this quote in the CT Mirror](#) announcing the governor's plan (emphasis mine):

The governor said some of the \$407.6 million his proposal would go to close the deficit and **some to the most impoverished school districts**, but he declined to provide details.

Declined to provide details? You know what is coming. It is likely that this proposal will result in new spending and do very little to solve our deficit and funding problems. Is it any surprise to see more and more people giving up on our state leaders and moving their tax residency out of Connecticut?

As I have said publicly, local elections matter, but elections for representation in Hartford really matter. Please pay attention, and please contact your legislators about Governor Malloy's proposal. Your voice can help ensure that we get real and permanent solutions to these problems — not gimmicks.

— John Zagrodzky,

Chairman of the Darien Board of Finance

Editor's note: See also:

- [Malloy: Pension bills for CT towns part of a larger plan](#) (CT Mirror, Feb. 7)