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## **Letter: Greg Ehlers Says Sen. Bob Duff Not Defending Darien, Norwalk from State Budget Cuts**

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To the editor:

As soon as I announced my candidacy against Bob Duff for the State Senate from the 25th District, I was repeatedly told what a “nice guy” Bob is. People pointed out how he attended every ribbon-cutting community event and school graduation in town. I have repeatedly maintained that my campaign will be about issues and a more sustainable plan for Connecticut’s future, not staged photo opportunities.

But, my gosh, has Bob Duff let you down this week! I’m not just writing this as a political opponent of Duff’s but as a frustrated father of three in the district who cannot believe how Senator Duff has

unapologetically thrown Norwalk and Darien under the bus while fighting for Gov. Dan Malloy in Hartford.

For anyone unfamiliar with the proceedings, after the 2017 state budget passed the legislature last month, Gov. Malloy used the line-item veto to make \$20 million in cuts to municipalities and deep cuts to Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), which provide healthcare in under-served areas.

Many in the legislature have good reason to believe that Fairfield County will be targeted for the combined \$20 million in cuts to municipal aid and FQHCs. This means that Norwalk and Darien, which have already drafted their budgets for schools and hospitals, should expect significantly less aid from the state than the budget includes.

If you are a parent or a senior citizen, if you are struggling financially or are just a taxpayer in Fairfield County, these cuts to municipal aid should both infuriate and terrify you.

I haven't even gotten to the worst part.

Bob Duff – your elected senator and Senate Majority Leader – chose to use his substantial power in Hartford not to stick up for families in Norwalk and Darien, but to ensure that an attempt by both Republicans and Democrats in the legislature to override Gov. Malloy's line-item veto with two-thirds support would fail in the Senate.

Here's how Senator Duff stepped up to the plate when the governor needed him most: On Monday, he took the Senate floor and called for an end to the veto session without discussion. Yes, *our Bob Duff* of Norwalk single-handedly killed any chance of even discussing overriding the governor's line-item veto.

The outrage over this stunning lack of concern for transparency in government has been bipartisan. Bob Duff should expect some kind of reward from Gov. Malloy and the public union bosses untouched by the budget cuts: His hard work on their behalf paid off; our towns will suffer from the cuts.

It should now be as clear as day that Bob Duff is no longer concerned with Norwalk families. (He has never shown any interest in representing Darien families.) He must think he can snap a few pictures with Norwalkers and shake some hands at graduation, and no one will notice while he continues quest for power in Hartford by serving as Dan Malloy's favorite politician.

Bob Duff is a nice guy, sure, but you cannot allow him to represent you in Hartford anymore. That's why I've decided to run against a well-entrenched incumbent. Norwalk and Darien need real representation, not an opportunistic politician who puts himself before his constituents.

— Greg Ehlers

*Editor's note: Greg Ehlers is the Republican nominee from Darien running for the 25th District seat in the*

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*State Senate.*