March, 2025

Dear Representative \*NAME\*

I am writing to you as a resident of \*Town\* and also a \*parent/resident\* within the \*school\* to express my concerns regarding the state’s funding of our school district.

\*School\*, like many “Hold Harmless” school districts, has been severely underfunded since the initiation of the Student Opportunity Act. Our town needs \*insert information on what you are facing, an override/layoffs/school closing\*. For a state that prides itself on education and equity, Massachusetts is failing to provide fair and equitable funding to our communities, which threatens the education of our children.

In addition to being negatively impacted by the “Hold Harmless” provision, regional schools are also impacted by lack of support in other areas. One example of this is the transportation mandate imposed on regional school districts. Although the state promised to fund the transportation for regional school districts fully, the state continues to fall short on its promise. However, the state will not lift its mandate on regional school districts to provide free bussing to every student in the district. Conversely, comprehensive districts are allowed to set mileage limits or impose transportation charges for bussing their students to offset budget deficits. Regional school districts are handcuffed by the improperly funded bussing mandate.

Even though the state has barely increased its funding to regional schools over the past two decades, the number of unfunded or partially funded mandates continue to roll in from the state. From Bullying Prevention to Title IX compliance to Suicide Awareness training to Equity programming to Multi-Lingual Learner Education to Special Education, the number of mandates the state has imposed increases every year. While many of these mandates bring necessary change and have a positive impact on students, they all come with a significant cost, which only exacerbates our already underfunded budget and further stresses our member communities.

At this point, our town and hundreds of other communities are at a crossroads. Towns are cutting teachers, class sizes across the state have increased, E&D and revolving funds have been drained, fees increased. With an aging senior population and communities filled with typical, working-class people, the taxpayers in our communities cannot bear the burden of overrides, individuals cannot afford to lose their jobs. Our community has run out of options to save our schools.

Therefore, I am urgently asking you to support \*school\* and all of the other “Hold Harmless” and regional school districts who have been left behind by the **broken funding formula**.

Sincerely