

Mayor Harp, Senate President Looney, Board of Alders, and City's Legislative Delegation Hail Agreement to Protect Municipal Aid in FY '16

New Haven, CT—Mayor Toni N. Harp joined Senate President Martin M. Looney and members of New Haven's delegation to the General Assembly today to hail last week's bipartisan agreement for protecting critical funding for municipal aid in FY '16. The agreement restores hospital funding in full and preserves funding for core social services.

"The current year's bipartisan budget agreement once again demonstrates that Democrats were willing to compromise in a way where we didn't abandon our principles of protecting our investments in property tax relief, community hospitals, education, transportation and the safety net," said Sen. Looney. "We remain committed to making long-term structural changes to benefit the hardworking families of Connecticut."

"Today we thank members of New Haven's legislative delegation for their support, and for recognizing how municipal aid to New Haven and all Connecticut cities provides a reliable return on investment," Mayor Toni N. Harp said. "In New Haven, city leaders, city workers, tens of thousands of city residents, investors, vendors, and others with a vested interest in the city's financial stability are grateful for this assurance that the next 90 days will not include the additional turmoil of this budget upheaval."

"I am pleased that legislators were able to work in a bipartisan manner to close this year's budget deficit with the goal of restoring promised hospital funding and municipal aide," Rep. Robyn Porter said. "Instead of being forced to find a way to cut back on basic services, the great city of New Haven and town of Hamden will be able to continue to keep their programs running effectively."

"For too long and to its peril, Connecticut turned its back on our cities. With the passage of SB1 last year and through innovative bonding programs in economic development and transportation, we have begun to correct that mistake," said Rep. Roland Lemar. "In fact, as we look across the country, we see that it is cities like New Haven that are leading the nation's resurgence. Recent graduates and recent retirees alike are flocking back to our urban core. Businesses want to locate in dense, talent-rich environments with ample amenities for its workforce. We still have a long way to go to bring true equity back to our Cities and their residents, but protecting municipal aid in this mitigation package was vital to the success of the City, its residents and its workforce."

"I'm proud that we came together to balance the 2016 budget," said Rep. Robert Megna. "Restoring hospital funding and preserving aid for cities and towns are both victories for New Haven. We have some tough decisions to make as we move on to the 2017 budget, but I'm confident that once again we can work together to find bipartisan solutions."

Members of the New Haven Board of Alders issues a statement expressing their appreciation for continuing state aid:

"We join Mayor Harp in applauding our delegation for protecting critical municipal aid in this week's deficit mitigation package.

We represent a city with substantial tax-exempt property so state aid helps to assure that our residents receive core city services without being subject to higher and higher property taxes.

That's why we are proud and appreciative of our state legislative delegation's leadership on this issue. Their ability to get support for the cities most impacted by tax-exempt properties, and to provide car tax relief for our residents throughout the state is commendable.

As stewards of the public trust, New Haven's legislative branch has prioritized efforts towards fiscal discipline. Those efforts in conjunction with the executive branch's cooperation have led to the improvement of our bond rating, the maintenance of our tax rate and bringing in back-to-back balanced budgets.

In that spirit of collective work and responsibility for the best outcomes for our residents we join Mayor Harp in supporting our state leadership they continue to protect the municipal aid that will allow us to continue to lower our residents tax burdens while preserving and improving those core city services that affect our constituents' daily lives."

The bipartisan deficit mitigation package achieves the following:

- Closes the state's \$220 million current year deficit as estimated by the governor's office and state comptroller.
- Restores all \$140 million in hospital funding, of which the state's portion is \$31.6 million, which was previously being withheld. This funding is partial reimbursement for hospitals' Medicaid expenses and the care they provide to those most in need.
- Preserves core government services and protects funding for many vital social services.
- Eliminates proposed cuts to town aid.
- Replaces the governor's rescissions proposed on March 16.