

The Connecticut General Assembly



For IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 12, 2018

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Rep. Cook Calls for Release of Torrington Car Tax Reimbursements

Signs letter to legislative leaders urging immediate action

State Rep. Michelle Cook (D-Torrington) called on legislative leaders to release promised motor vehicle tax reimbursements to Torrington, Hamden, and Bridgeport in a letter sent today on behalf of legislators representing those municipalities.

According to the recently passed bipartisan budget, municipalities with a mill rate over 39 – the state mandated car tax cap for 2018 – are supposed to be reimbursed by the state for the difference between the cap and a higher mill rate. Torrington, Hamden, and Bridgeport have been denied this funding because each went through a property tax revaluation in 2015 or later that was not considered in the motor vehicle tax reimbursement calculation in the budget.

The three communities are facing a \$10,000,000 shortfall collectively due to this discrepancy. In response to a letter sent by the cities' three mayors earlier this month, Office of Policy and Management Secretary Ben Barnes refused to release the funds until the legislature takes up deficit mitigation.

“When we passed the bipartisan budget, there was a clear agreement that towns with a mill rate over 39 would be reimbursed for payments lost due to the car tax cap. It is wrong for the Governor’s office to punish Torrington and two other towns because of a discrepancy in the budget language,” **Rep. Cook** said. “We’re asking legislative leaders to immediately address this issue when we convene on February 7. There’s no reason to hold our towns hostage like this.”

The letter sent today asks legislative leadership to include the withheld funding in any final deficit mitigation package. A majority of legislators representing the three towns signed the letter, which was addressed to House and Senate leadership.

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