



Post Office Box 500  
Waterville Valley  
New Hampshire 03215  
(603) 236-4730  
(603) 236-2056 FAX

September 15, 2020

New Hampshire Commission on Education Funding

**Re: Letter of Opposition to the Re-Institution of State Wide Education Property Tax**

Commission Members:

We are writing on behalf of the Town of Waterville Valley to express opposition to any form of re-instituting the former system of assessing the state-wide education property tax (SWEPT). Waterville Valley is in opposition to proposed education property tax programs currently under discussion because any such program places an undue burden on current property owners and are potentially harmful to future property values. Also, such a program does not take into account the overall budget requirements of potential donor communities.

A SWEPT system funded at 2019 levels would cause a \$2.05 increase in the Waterville Valley property tax rate. This represents a 14.5% increase in the overall rate with no change in any of the services the Town currently provides. This state education tax rate amount is nearly 59% of all taxes raised to support education in the WV School District. Raising this money twice would mean a \$1,025 annual increase in taxes for a \$500,000 property. While many consider Waterville Valley as a 'property rich community,' there are many residents who would be adversely impacted by such a significant increase in the overall rate. An increased tax rate with the same or fewer municipal and education services will also have a detrimental impact on sale prices and lower property values across the community.

As a resort-based community completely surrounded by the White Mountain National Forest, Waterville Valley must provide municipal services far beyond what comparably sized communities provide for their residents. Waterville Valley provides year-round, full-time Public Safety Coverage for Police, Fire and EMS services. The Town has fully enclosed water and wastewater treatment facilities, including one of the most stringent wastewater discharge permits in the state. Trash collection and disposal systems include curbside trash pickup with animal proof dumpsters and a transfer station. Additionally, the Town provides public works services such as road maintenance, buildings and grounds maintenance and administrative services such as motor vehicle registrations, tax/utility billing and vital records.

Although the Town has 555 full-time residents, municipal services described above are commensurate with a town of thousands of people. Like other resorts in the state, the Waterville Valley Resort is a major economic factor in the greater Plymouth region including employment and generation of traffic which helps support

*The Town of Waterville Valley prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability or family status.*

*The Town of Waterville Valley is an equal opportunity employer.*

overall tourism industry in the region. All of the costs of these support services are borne by taxpayers in Waterville Valley with no funding from surrounding communities. Negative impacts on the Resort resulting from a decrease in municipal services may be felt not just in Waterville Valley, but also in Plymouth, Campton, Thornton and surrounding communities.

For all of the above stated reasons, the Town of Waterville Valley opposes any re-institution of a SWEPT and we urge the Commission to seek other education funding options. Simply collecting tax dollars from one community and giving those dollars to other communities does not guarantee an improvement in the education system or opportunities for children in the receiving community.

If you require additional information regarding this matter, please contact the Selectmen through the Town Manager, Mark Decoteau. You can reach Mark by phone at (603) 236-4730 or email at [wvmanager@watervillevalley.org](mailto:wvmanager@watervillevalley.org).

Sincerely,

The Waterville Valley Board of Selectmen:



Margaret C. Turner  
Chair



William M. Aronson  
Selectman



Richard A. Rita  
Selectman