

IT'S ALL ABOUT LOCAL SAVINGS, LOCAL CONTROL

Our government is elected to support and further the well being and prosperity of its citizens. A high quality education system is essential for prosperity.

Vermonters believe strongly that local control/decision making results in the highest quality schools, ones that provide the best education for its students and the future prosperity of its towns. Control of its budgets, ones that towns create and voters approve, is essential to realize these goals.

What Gov. Scott has proposed will remove local control of a major part of the school budget and put it in state government control. The reason he gives is to save taxpayers \$26 million. That's a lot of money. But that number and the tax savings is just a sound bite. In fact every dollar he proposes to save would be saved without his proposal, by leaving the negotiating process with the people who will pay the bills. The savings will be realized because of an automatic change in health care plans. There is no need for the Governor to step in and usurp the authority and responsibility of towns. Not one penny more will be saved with his plan.

So why is he vetoing a budget he previously approved? He wants to take control of all this money. He doesn't trust local towns to do with it what he wants them to do with it—return it to taxpayers. After all they might spend some of it on a new bus, fix the roof, etc. But it's up to the towns to decide what to do with their money. And it's a terrific sound bite—save \$26 million! Who doesn't want that? It appears to make him the great tax reducer. But it just isn't so.

In Gov. Scott's world the state knows best, not local school boards. He is attempting to score political points with misleading numbers and arguments. Do not be persuaded: His plan achieves nothing more than local decision makers would achieve. We Vermonters value local control. Our government—our governor—should respect that and support it.