



# West Valley Central School

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*Home of the "Wildcats"*

Mr. William Logue  
33 Holbrook Road  
West Hartford, CT 06107-1619

February 11, 2013

Dear Mr. William Logue:

On January 28, 2013 at the regular Board of Education meeting the West Valley School Board unanimously voted in favor of the attached resolution. The Board of Education formally requests the Federal Government to restore and stabilize the funding for the cleanup of the West Valley Demonstration Project.

West Valley Central School is a small rural school district about 45 minutes south of Buffalo. Our small school district receives a token PILOT amount (\$280,046) to make up for the loss of revenue attributed to the West Valley Demonstration Project property tax exemption located in the Town of Ashford, the site sits on approximately 3,300 acres. During the time of Nelson Rockefeller the possibility of a nuclear plant here in West Valley promised jobs and businesses. Unfortunately with a nuclear leak, the plant closed and all attention was geared to clean up – a long, long time line. Businesses dried up and this small hamlet essentially became dependent on the school as its life line.

The tables below clearly show the difference between the PILOT amount and what would be due based on assessed value if the property was taxable. Approximately 85% exempt with the major portion, 94% being attributed to the New York State owned land at the West Valley Demonstration Project site. As shown in the chart below if this land was fully taxable the school district would receive over \$2.7 million annually in taxes. Currently the school district receives only \$280,046 for the PILOT payment which has not changed since the 1996-97 school year.

	2012-2013 Assessed Value	Town of Ashford School Tax Rate	Payment if Property was on tax roll	State PILOT payment
NY State Nuclear Site	\$500,598,800	\$37.62	\$2,700,000	\$280,046
Total District Value	\$628,380,834			

The historical budget and tax levy chart further magnifies the difficulties of having the majority of the land tax exempt. While the school has worked very hard to eliminate expenses, and has sought shared services, the tax levies are still very high compared to surrounding districts. The tax rate on full value \$23.32 is one of the highest in the county. While the average budget increase over the last 5 years has been 2.3%, the average tax levy increase has been 5.2%. In future years, due to New York State's tax levy limit it will become increasingly difficult to maintain educational programming and opportunities for students. West Valley has always been proud of its ability to provide an excellent educational setting for the districts residents. However, the financial struggles we are facing magnified by the presence of the nuclear site continue to threaten our existence. The problem is each year is becoming exceedingly difficult to maintain budgets without eliminating important educational programming and opportunities.

<b>Historical Budget and Tax Levy</b>					
Year	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Budget Expenditures	3.59%	4.44%	2.26%	.24%	1.04%
Tax Levy	6.88%	5.93%	5.63%	5.58%	2.00%

The storage of radioactive material at the West Valley Demonstration Project site creates concern for potential homeowners. The cleanup of this site could alleviate some of these concerns and improve our chances of increasing our community and school population. We strongly encourage you to maintain the funding to keep our community safe and attractive to both new and existing families.

Should you have any questions or require any clarification, please don't hesitate to contact me at (716)942-3293 at extension 307.

Sincerely



Eric J. Lawton  
Superintendent



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## Resolution by the West Valley Central School District Board of Education

### REQUESTING FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO RESTORE AND STABILIZE FUNDING FOR WEST VALLEY DEMONSTRATION PROJECT CLEANUP

- I. **WHEREAS**, the President's 2013 budget request included only \$50 million for the West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP), and
- II. **WHEREAS**, the House Appropriations Committee Energy and Water Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 2013 also provides only \$50 million for the WVDP, and
- III. **WHEREAS**, the \$50 million budgeted amount represents a reduction of one-third in funding for the WVDP from fiscal year 2012, and
- IV. **WHEREAS**, with \$20 million per year required to keep the facility safe, and \$30+ million procurement to build the high level waste storage facility and to purchase storage casks by 2015, a \$50 million appropriation will significantly impact the Phase I decommissioning activities, and
- V. **WHEREAS**, if the WVDP receives an annual appropriation of only \$50 million throughout Phase I, it will take approximately 20 years to complete, which is twice as long as the Department of Energy initially projected when they assumed funding would remain \$75 million per year, and
- VI. **WHEREAS**, the extension of Phase 1 decommissioning work from 10 years to 20 years will further add an extra \$200 million to the total project cost, and
- VII. **WHEREAS**, the federal government must provide adequate funding to continue the cleanup project on schedule and as expeditiously as possible, now, therefore, be it
  - I. **RESOLVED**, that the West Valley Central District School Board of Education hereby requests the federal government restore funding to the current \$75 million that was anticipated when the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision were in 2010, and be it further
  - II. **RESOLVED**, that this level of funding must then be stabilized for 10 years to complete all Phase I decommissioning work, and be it further
  - III. **RESOLVED**, that the Superintendent is hereby directed to forward copies of this resolution to US Secretary of Energy Chu, Senators Schumer and Gillibrand, Congressman Reed, Governor Cuomo, State Senator Young, Assembly Member Giglio, Bryan Bower, USDOE Director of the WVDP, and Paul Bembia, NYSERDA Director of the West Valley Site Management Program.

Resolution was voted on January 28, 2013

Moved by Frascella, seconded by Jackson-McCarthy

7 ayes, \_\_\_ nays \_\_\_ abstain

accepted

Stephen Kowalski, President of Board