

March 25, 2009

His Excellency Deval Patrick
Governor of Massachusetts
State House, Room 360
Boston, MA 02133-1054

RE: \$168 million Federal Stimulus funding allocation for Massachusetts public schools

Dear Governor Patrick:

We send you greetings from the Abington School Committee and the Abington Public Schools – home of the proud Green Wave! Abington is a small, residential community located approximately 20 miles south of Boston. Because we do not have a large industrial base, we rely heavily on federal and state revenues to provide core public services.

Our struggling town has managed to meet foundation budget year after year, despite the hardships that this effort has caused to the overall town budget. Therefore, you can imagine our strong disappointment to learn that 166 communities had *not* met foundation spending including some of Massachusetts' wealthiest towns, which share in the receipt of the \$168M from the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* stabilization fund, yet Abington would receive nothing. Surely, our town, **which ranks in the bottom ten percent in per-pupil expenditure**, requires this funding more than the Commonwealth's most affluent communities.

Due to the fiscal crisis resulting in reductions in state and local aid, Abington schools face a budget shortfall of \$1.6 million for FY'10. This results in intolerable budget cuts to our public schools with a loss of over **40 positions** including numerous classroom teachers, paraprofessionals and other staff members as well as the closing of a school. Are all the towns receiving ARRA stabilization funds making similar reductions that dangerously jeopardize the quality of public education?

As elected municipal officials, we urge you to re-allocate the \$168M ARRA stabilization funds in a more equitable manner. Please find a better way to determine which communities need this funding the most.

Respectfully,

The Abington School Committee

Brenda Pignone, Chairman
Patricia Vantine, Vice Chairman
Russell FitzGerald, Secretary
Wayne Rogiers, Member
James West, Member

cc: Abington Board of Selectmen
Senator Michael Morrissey
Representative Allen McCarthy

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Mail or email to:

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