

Selectboard
Town of Windham
5976 Windham Hill Rd.
Windham, VT 05359
802-874-4211

April 18, 2022

Governor Phil Scott
109 State Street, Pavilion
Montpelier, VT 05609

Dear Governor Scott,

The Town of Windham has seen a precipitous drop in our Common Level of Appraisal (CLA), falling from 102.23% in 2019 to 83.75% in 2021. This drop correlates directly to the volatile real estate market which resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic and the accompanying increase in sale prices of homes over their assessed values. Our CLA had been steady since our town-wide reappraisal in 2015, until the pandemic hit. We understand that there are many other Vermont towns that have experienced a similar phenomenon.

This drop in our CLA has caused an increase our Education Tax of 30 cents per \$100 of each home's assessed value. We were already being taxed at a rate of \$1.64, and once all the calculations are included, this would increase our tax rate to \$2.32 per \$100. The owners of homes valued at \$250,000, for example, would face an increase of \$1,700 in their Education Tax. This increase is of great concern to our taxpayers.

Additionally, under law, we are now required to have a reappraisal done, which is costly. It also assumes we can find an appraisal company that is available soon. Of the 12 PVR-approved firms our listers have contacted, only two submitted proposals to work with us, and the earliest either of those could start the process here would be 2025. Furthermore, if market values decrease when this real estate bubble ends, our CLA would change dramatically again, necessitating yet another reappraisal.

We know that measures have been taken in the recent past to ameliorate the effects of the pandemic, for instance, the holding harmless of the equalized pupil count. We would appreciate your giving serious consideration to the housing bubble's impact on the tax payers of Windham and other towns, as that impact is also a result of the pandemic.

Thank you for your kind consideration,

Kord Scott
Selectboard Chair

cc: Sen. Balint, Speaker Krowinski, Sen. White, Rep. Goldman, Rep. Partridge, Rep Ancel, and all members of the Ways and Means Committee