

September 13, 2016

Representative Thomas Stanley
[INSERT Statehouse Address]

Dear Representative Stanley:

The Town of Lincoln Board of Selectmen and School Committee want to publicly acknowledge their grateful appreciation for your dedicated efforts that led to the inclusion in the Massachusetts FY'17 Budget of a newly-created appropriation to help the Town meet its long standing commitment to educating the children of Hanscom Air Force Base. Specifically, the Budget authorizes that **“not less than \$100,000 shall be made available to the town of Lincoln to mitigate the costs of educating the children of retired-military families.”**

We requested these funds to begin to help the Town offset its increasing costs to educate the growing number of military retiree children whose parents have opted to live on the Base, as enabled by the federal government several years ago when it privatized the Base housing. The retiree children potentially include high school students in addition to grades K-8. The Town has always been, and remains, committed to doing its part to support the Base, including educating the K-8 Base residents for many decades and providing other services. The Base is an essential component of our national defense and is a major contributor to the State's economy. However, the growing cost of educating the children of military retirees living on the Base has confronted the Town with the dilemma that this additional cost is not funded by the federal or State governments nor by the Base housing owner. The Town is prohibited from levying real estate tax on the Base housing, the K-8 children are not covered by the Town's federal contract to operate the Base schools, and there is no other source of federal or State funding.

The new appropriation to assist the Town was included in the House Ways and Means Budget, the House Budget (although not the Senate Budget), and the final House-Senate Conference Committee Budget passed by both branches, and was among a number of specific appropriations vetoed by the Governor but overridden by the House and Senate. At every step of the process, you were instrumental in bringing the merits of our request to the attention of the appropriate Budget-writing staff and legislative leadership, as well as letting them know that our request was a priority matter for your district and a worthy expenditure by the Commonwealth even in the constrained revenue environment in which the Budget was developed. You and your very capable staff took the time to understand the complex legal and financial issues underlying our request, arranged meetings with key House Budget staff to give us the opportunity to present our concerns, and remained vigilant and active to advocate on our behalf throughout the process.

This is only the latest example of your consistent support and responsiveness to the Town's needs, and we look forward to continuing to work with you in the coming years. Thank you Tom, and well done!

Peter Braun, Chair
Board of Selectmen

Jennifer Glass, Chair
School Committee

Cc: Lincoln Journal
Lincoln Squirrel