Library News



Budget Cuts at Library

City proposes reducing funding to the Silas Bronson Library

The Proposed Budget for 2018-19 will:

Reduce overall library budget

- Proposed budget is $268,000 less than requested by the library;
- Proposed budget is $60,000 less than this year's budget;
- When the library's budget is smaller than the year before, the library no longer qualifies for state aid.

Keep 1 Librarian position vacant for 9 months

- Even when fully staffed, we have a skeleton crew;
- Leaving positions vacant puts strain on current employees;
- Leaving the position vacant prevents the library from offering numerous programs requested by the public;
- Due to the staffing shortage, the library may have to be closed on Monday mornings starting in September.

Underfund book budget by $100,000

- The book budget includes books, DVDs, music CDs, eBooks, audiobooks, newspapers, magazines, online resources, and our collection catalog; the book budget was cut in 2010 and has yet to be restored.

Reduce funding for Service/Maintenance Contracts

- Includes elevator, automatic door, and copier servicing/maintenance.

Eliminate funding request for Interlibrary Loan Service (ILL)

- New courier service to supplement state service, which currently has a 5 week backlog of materials waiting to be picked up.

Eliminate request to hire more Pages

- Pages put items back on shelves, make sure the items are in the right location, fetch books from storage, and similar tasks; until 2010 budget cuts, the library had 14 Pages; now we have 5, forcing Librarians to do Page work instead of working with the public.

Eliminate request to hire Development/PR Specialist

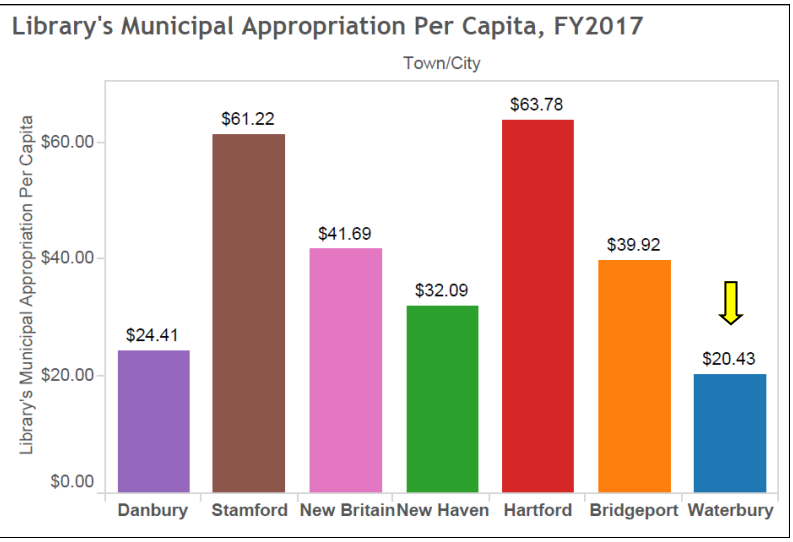
- New position would increase library's ability to raise money for operations and special projects.

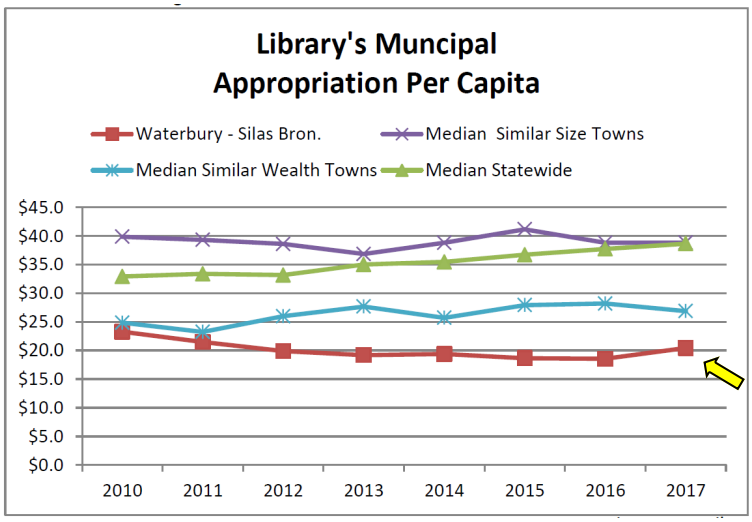
How Do We Compare?

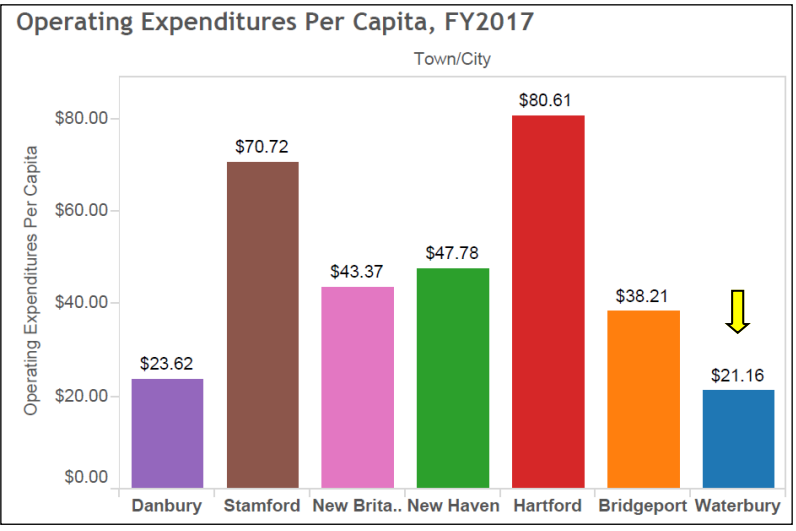
Waterbury has had one of the most underfunded library systems in the entire state for decades, and the situation is getting worse.

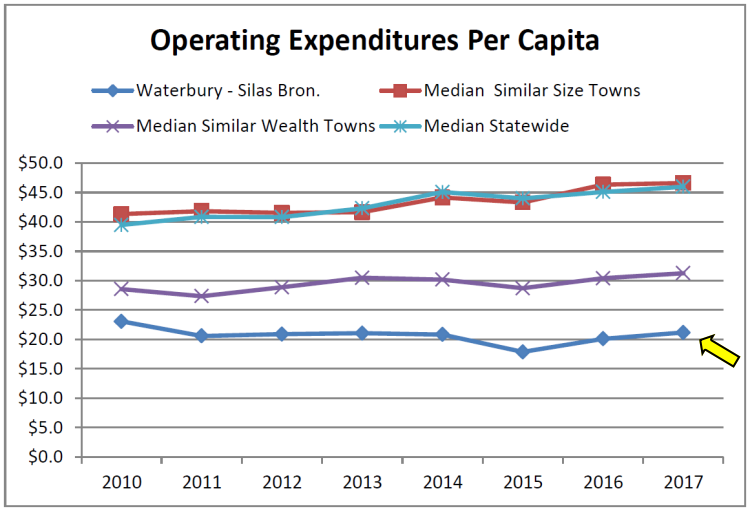
Studies have shown that well-funded library systems are economic generators, enhance the quality of life for a city's residents, and increase the ability of a city to attract new residents and businesses. Access to public libraries increases students' test scores, reduces unemployment and homelessness, generates new business growth, builds community, and supports lifelong learning.

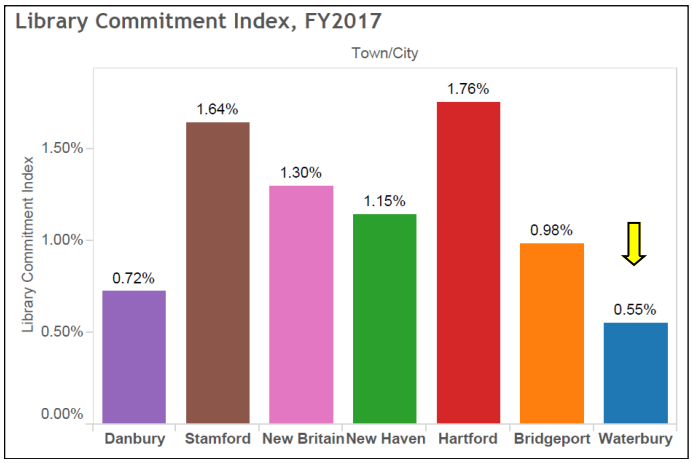
The following charts were prepared by the Connecticut State Library.



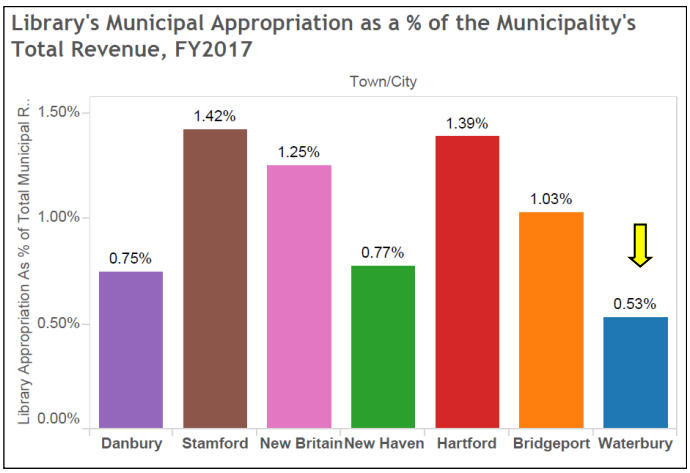


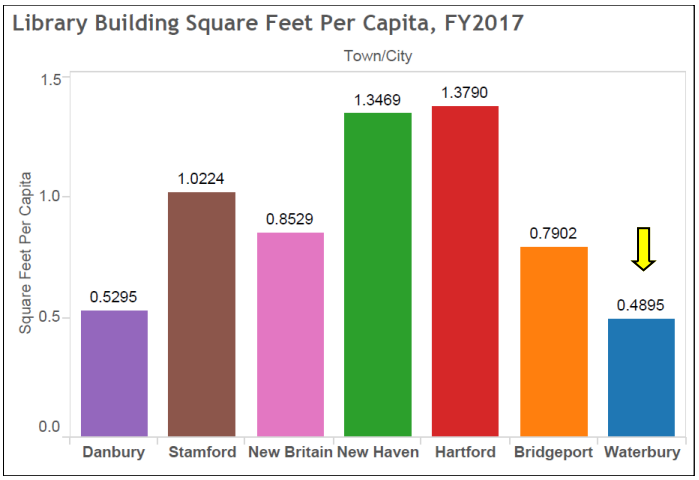


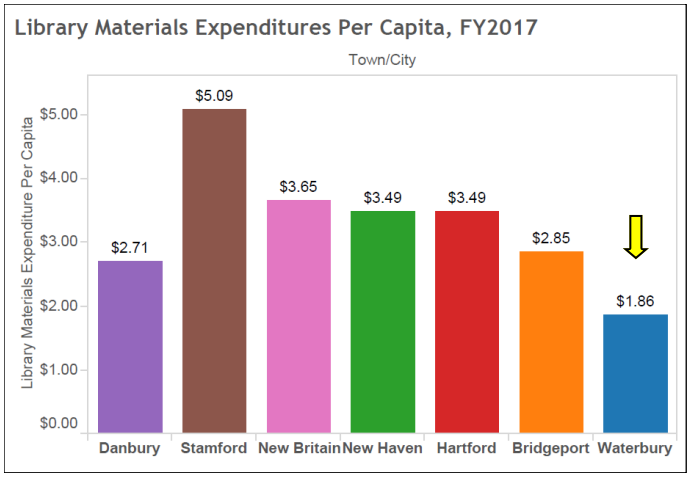


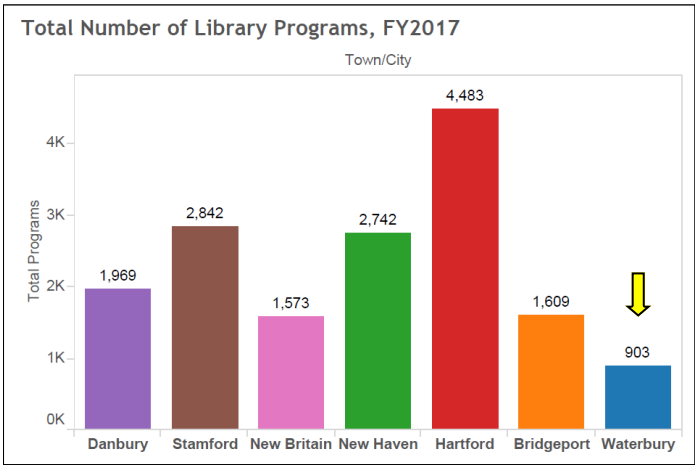


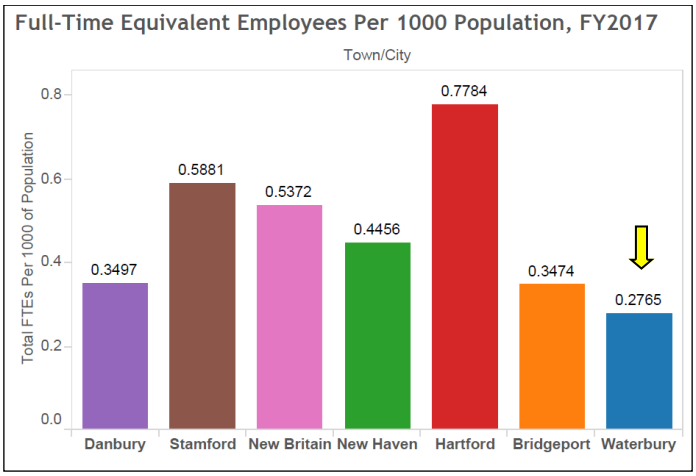
The Library Commitment Index is a measure of a community's financial commitment to the library, comparing the library's total operating expenditures with the town/city's total tax revenues. The index is calculated by dividing a Library's Total Operating Expenditures by the Municipality's Total Tax Revenue. This index is an attempt to measure financial commitment to libraries, regardless of income source, and adjusting for a town's wealth. Even towns with scarce resources and a limited tax base should be able to devote a reasonable % of their town's resources to the library.

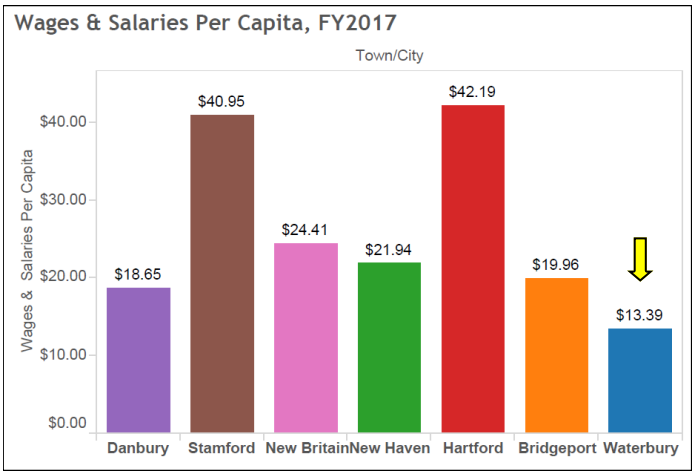












Let Your Voice Be Heard!



If no one complains about the proposed cuts, the City will assume that no one cares.

Public Speaking

Aldermanic Chambers, City Hall, 235 Grand Street

Monday, April 9, 7 p.m.
Monday, April 23, 7 p.m.
Monday, May 7, 7 p.m.
Monday, May 21, 7 p.m.

Anyone who lives in Waterbury or pays taxes in Waterbury can speak at the regular meetings of the Board of Aldermen.

The second and final public hearing for the budget has not been scheduled, but will happen sometime in May.



Radio

WATR 1320 AM 203-757-1320

Call in during Talk of the Town, Monday-Friday, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Let Your Voice Be Heard!

Write Letters/Email in Support of the Library Budget

Board of Aldermen

Paul Pernerewski, Jr. (D), President
98 Stoddard Road, Waterbury, CT 06708
aldermanpernerewski@waterburyct.org

Ernest M. Brunelli (D), Majority Leader
138 Addison Street, Waterbury, CT 06708
aldermanbrunelli@waterburyct.org

Mary Grace Cavallo (R)
124 Fairfield Avenue, Waterbury, CT 06708
alderwomancavallo@waterburyct.org

Brenda L. Cotto (D)
21 Cooke Street 2B, Waterbury, CT 06710
alderwomancotto@waterburyct.org

Michael DiGiovancarlo (D)
149 Woodbine Street, Waterbury, CT 06705
aldermandigiovancarlo@waterburyct.org

Christian D'Orso (D)
42 Rosemount Avenue, Waterbury, CT 06708
aldermandorso@waterburyct.org

Steven Giacomi (R), Minority Leader
30 Regency Hill, Waterbury, CT 06708
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Gregory A. Hadley (D)
61 Ives Street, Waterbury, CT 06704
aldermanhadley@waterburyct.org

Jetlir Kulla (D)
93 Cedar Avenue, Waterbury, CT 06705
aldermankulla@waterburyct.org

Victor Lopez, Jr. (D)
23 Haystack Circle, Waterbury, CT 06704
aldermanlopez@waterburyct.org

Sandra Martinez-McCarthy (D)
29 East Liberty Street, Waterbury, CT 06706
alderwomanmccarthy@waterburyct.org

Vernon R. Matthews, Jr. (R)
102 Madera Drive, Waterbury, CT 06704
aldermanmatthews@waterburyct.org

Ronald A. Napoli, Jr. (D), Pro Temp
334 Gaylord Drive, Waterbury CT 06708
aldermannapoli@waterburyct.org

George Noujaim (R)
311 Windy Drive, Waterbury, CT 06705
aldermannoujaim@waterburyct.org

Roger L. Sherman, Jr. (R)
64 White Oak Lane, Waterbury, CT 06705
aldermansherman@waterburyct.org

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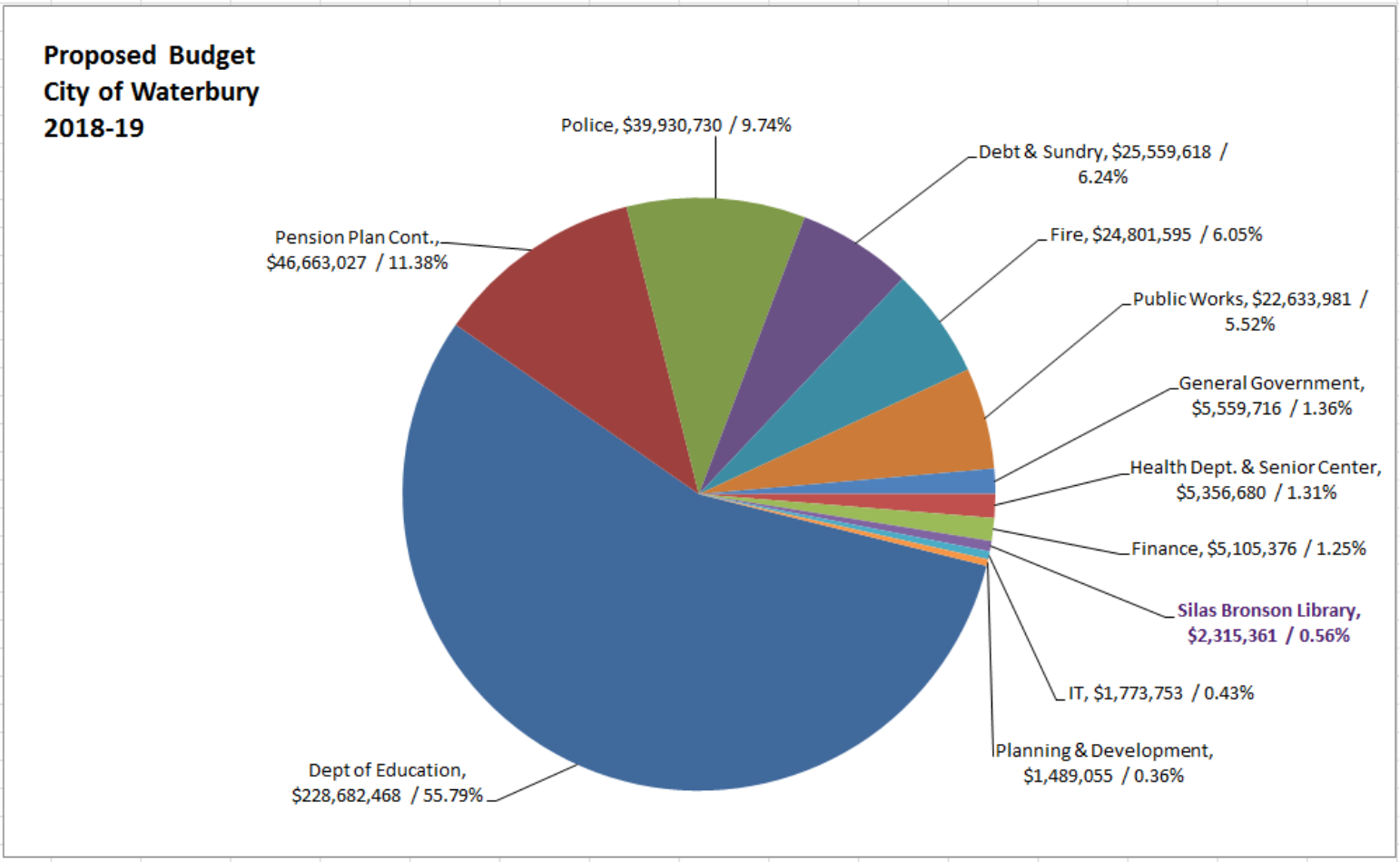
Write Letters/Email in Support of the Library Budget

Mayor O'Leary , City Hall
235 Grand Street, Waterbury, CT 06702

Republican-American: opinion@rep-am.com

They allow one letter every 30 days; include full name, street address, daytime telephone number for verification (only your name and town will appear in print).

The Waterbury Observer: waterburyobserver@gmail.com



Sample Letters/Emails

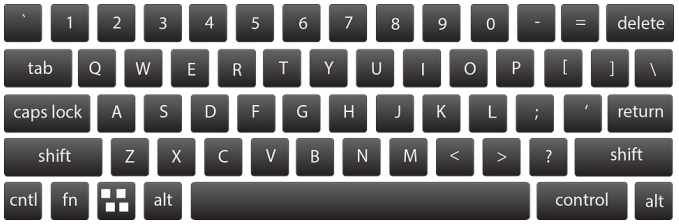
Don't know what to write? Here are some ideas of what to include.

We encourage you to include your own experiences: Why is the library important to you? How has the library helped you? What is your favorite thing about the library?

Dear _____,

The Silas Bronson Library is important to me because _____. Please restore the full funding requested by the library, so they don't have to cut the services they provide.

Thank you,



Dear _____,

The Silas Bronson Library provides vital services for our community. The library circulates more than 145,000 books, movies, and music, and is visited more than 243,000 times each year. The library offers free educational programs for all ages, as well as cultural programs that enrich the quality of life in Waterbury.

The library offers free computer and internet access, which is so important in a city where as much as 30% of the households do not have access to the internet. The library helps people find jobs and connects them to free resources and mentors if they want to start their own business. The library offers free computer classes in person and online tutorials for vital job skills.

The library is a safe haven for teenagers and young adults. The library gives students a quiet place to do their homework. The librarians help students with their homework and help everyone find the information they need.

The library is also a community gathering place, where people with common interests can meet new friends. The library has a Chess Club, several Book Clubs, Anime Club, and Gaming Club. The library is very responsive to requests from the public; the staff do their best to provide the library services that the people want.

Studies have shown that public libraries improve the property values for the neighborhoods they are in; they improve the quality of life for children and seniors, especially when they live in walking distance of a library; public libraries are also economic generators, offering skills training for the workforce and mentoring for business startups.

Reducing funding to the Silas Bronson Library will cause harm to Waterbury's residents. Increasing funding to the library will help increase quality of life, literacy rates, and economic vitality for all of Waterbury. Providing full funding to the Silas Bronson Library will benefit everyone.

Sincerely,