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SEAFORD UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION • 1600 WASHINGTON AVENUE • SEAFORD • NEW YORK • 11783 • (516) 592-4012

April 15, 2024

DR. ADELE V. PECORA
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Members of the New York State Legislature
Legislative Office Building, Room 550
Albany, NY 12248

RE: Opposition to New York State Faith-Based Affordable Housing Act, Assembly Bill A.8386 Senate Bill SS7791

Please be advised that the Seaford School District opposes the above-referenced bill for the same reasons we opposed the Housing Compact Plan in April 2023. If enacted, this bill will bypass multiple layers of local control and decision making and will negatively impact our school community without affording input from local officials and school districts. A "one size fits all" approach will yield serious and unintended consequences that will negatively impact our town and school district for many years to come.

Increasing the number of families in our town will undoubtedly burden our infrastructure and overcrowd our schools. Our District simply does not have the means or the space to build the additional infrastructure necessary to support a large number of new students plus our current student population. Our four school buildings are already at full capacity with no available classrooms and our demographic study shows steady enrollment for the next nine years. The financial burden associated with a lack of physical space to house additional students would be outrageous for our District and would be further frustrated if the State reduces the resources of aid available in the current budget proposal.

Not only do we not have the physical space to educate additional students but absorbing new students and increasing class sizes, without expanding the tax base to fund their education, would be devastating to our schools and our community as it would impose a strangling burden on our budget. Equally devastating would be to raise taxes to offset this financial burden as Long Island already has some of the highest taxes in the country.

As a District, the safety and support of our students, faculty and staff are paramount. Overcrowding our schools and straining our budget has the potential to negatively impact our security plans and our Pupil Personnel Department. As you know, students everywhere suffered social and emotional trauma and education loss resulting from the disruption to schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a District, we acknowledge and prioritize social and emotional supports, not because they are now state mandates, but because we seek to educate and support the whole child and optimize their chances to have happy and successful futures. The proposed plan would negatively impact the initiatives this State sought to advance.

The Seaford Board of Education has a moral and fiduciary duty as elected community members to oppose initiatives that do not serve the best interests of our residents who entrust us with their children and with their tax dollars. Accordingly, we ask that you abandon this bill as written.

Sincerely,

Lisa A. Herbert
President of Seaford Board of Education

Adele V. Pecora, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

cc: Governor Kathy Hochul
Assemblyman David G. McDonough
State Senator Steven D. Rhoads
Nassau County Legislator Michael J. Giangregorio
Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman
Town Supervisor Don Clavin
Town Councilman Chris Carini