

**Board of County Commissioners**

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Hunterdon Commissioner On State Budget: Money For Many, Nothing For Hunterdon School Kids

Hunterdon County Commissioner John E. Lanza, at the July 6th Commissioner meeting, questioned how Governor Murphy could approve a state budget that cut aid to twenty Hunterdon County school districts by more than \$3 million, while awarding hundreds of millions for favored legislators' projects, including \$10 million in additional aid to North Bergen schools.

Calling it more than an outrage, Lanza said he would send the state budget added items list to the Hunterdon County school districts that had their aid cut, so they could seek answers from the legislators that represent the County that supported these add-ons, as to their failure to gain funds for Hunterdon County's school children and property taxpayers.

Lanza stated, "Twenty Hunterdon County school districts have had \$3.3 million in aid cut in the state budget approved last week, while some legislators found millions for their pet projects, including \$15 million to knock down buildings in Camden and an unexplained \$10 million for North Bergen schools.

And what is particularly galling is the fact that North Bergen schools had already received a \$3 million school aid increase in the original proposed budget. One district getting nearly as much as was cut from Hunterdon County schools, plus now \$10 million more."

Lanza added, "The budget add-ons included \$500,000 for a band shell in Hopewell, \$300,000 for the Paramus Public Library, and \$24 million to build a new museum in Jersey City. There is more, but the budget supporters in Trenton are so embarrassed that they refuse to reveal the complete list of the add-ons before the legislature voted on the budget bill.

The real question is why those representing Hunterdon County who supported these add-ons, thought that every one of these projects was a higher priority than our schools."