

April, 18th 2017

Good morning,

I am Mark Pettis, Vice President of the Siren School Board of Education. I am asking for your help in addressing a property owner in the Siren School District that is refusing to pay their property tax bill in full. The property mentioned is also home to approximately 27% of the Siren School District's Student Body. The property owner I am referring to is the Federal Government. From 1950 – 1969 the Federal Government made its tax payment in full to the School Districts, but lately the payments have been threatened to be eliminated altogether.

In FY 2014 taxes owed the Siren School District by the Federal Government was \$591,832.82. Due to a formula created by the land owner the payment was only \$159,794.86 leaving the local taxpayers to pick up the remaining \$432,037.96 in taxes owed. To make matters worse the payments are usually 18 months late and requires much paper work in order to receive the payment. The 27% payment is usually only 80% of that amount depending on the funds available. Some have said this is a Federal Government problem. I say it is a fairness problem experienced by School Districts that have property owned by The Federal Government and that have students residing on the property that attend Wisconsin Public Schools.

I am asking the Wisconsin Legislature to make adjustments (but not affect other schools) to the School Aid Formula to the Wisconsin School Districts negatively affected by the lack of payment of taxes owed by the Federal Government until it is paid in full.

I feel this situation is tantamount to a large housing project that is home to many students attending our public schools in which the owner only pays a small percentage of property taxes owed to our public schools.

Thank you for your time.

Mark Pettis, Vice President Siren School District.

