

Town, school district to receive \$500,000 for West Valley site

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ALBANY — Much-needed financial relief is on the way to the town of Ashford and the West Valley Central School District in the form of a \$500,000 supplemental payment in lieu of taxes secured by state Sen. Catharine Young in the state budget.

The allocation, which is in addition to the town's regular annual PILOT payment of \$500,000, is intended to ease the financial strain on the locality and taxpayers resulting from the long-term loss of tax revenue from the West Valley Demonstration Project site. The school district will receive \$280,000 of the allocation, with the remainder of \$220,000 going to the town of Ashford.

"Although state aid is intended to compensate, these payments are based on an assessment from 1980 and there hasn't been an increase in more than two decades," Young said. "This supplemental payment is critically needed to ease the pressure on taxpayers, the school district and the town, and to meet critical obligations."

"Senator Young has worked with the town on these financial issues for many years, and I cannot express how grateful I am for her constant support and commitment to helping us secure state aid and advance goals important to our future," said Town of Ashford Supervisor Charles Davis. "These funds couldn't arrive at a better time. With our town's master plan recently completed, we can now move forward with some of the recommended economic development projects without having to rely on taxpayers. I am optimistic about where we are headed."

"The West Valley Central School District and its Board of Education would like to thank Senator Young for successfully obtaining the \$280,000 supplemental PILOT payment. Senator Young has been working with the District for several years on the PILOT legislation. She has been a champion of our school district and the unique situation we are in as a host local government of the West Valley Demonstration Project. Senator Young's hard work and perseverance is greatly appreciated," said West Valley Central School District Superintendent, Eric Lawton.

West Valley was the site of the first and only commercial reprocessing plant in the United States. After operating between 1966 and 1972, it became the site of a federal demonstration project in 1980 to solidify and remove the accumulated nuclear waste, in addition to decontaminating and decommissioning the facility. Demolition began in 2017.