Dear \_\_\_

We school districts in northwestern Pennsylvania are strongly opposed to Governor Wolf’s proposed changes to school Basic Education Funding (BEF):

1. Governor Wolf’s proposal immediately re-allocates BEF to the detriment of nearly every school district in northwestern Pennsylvania;
2. Governor Wolf’s proposal relies upon new/increased State taxes.

Only through his proposed new/increased taxes does Governor Wolf’s budget proposal keep our districts’ state funding the same. If some or all of those new/increased taxes are rejected by the legislature, the remaining portion of Governor Wolf’s proposal would strip away an enormous portion of the BEF funding our districts receive. The Governor’s re-allocation sends the BEF funding to a few select districts elsewhere in the state. On a per pupil basis those “favored” districts would receive twice as much BEF funding as school districts in northwestern Pennsylvania.

The top section of the attached spreadsheet shows districts in northwestern Pennsylvania. The bottom section shows a sampling of some of the districts unduly “favored” in the Governor’s proposal. The yellow column shows BEF funding as it was allocated in 2019-2020. The blue column shows BEF funding the way the Governor wants to re-allocate. The red column shows the new taxes the governor wants to impose. The green column shows the % change between BEF funding as it was in 2019-2020 as compared to how the Governor wants to re-allocate.

It is also instructive to examine the per-pupil calculation found in the last column. The last column is calculated by dividing the district’s BEF amount (as proposed by Governor Wolf) by the number of pupils in the district. You can see that the pupils in the “favored” districts receive twice the amount of state BEF funding as districts in northwestern Pennsylvania.

Northwestern Pennsylvania is filled with small communities where industries have departed. Much of our undeveloped land is tied up in National Forest, State game lands and parks. In other words, we do not have robust tax bases that allow us to generate large property tax collections. **Basic Education Funding is the keystone to keeping our school doors open.** We urge you to pass a budget that **rejects Governor Wolf’s re-allocation of BEF, that** **preserves our current BEF funding** and that adds to it a fair increase that offsets our inflationary and COVID-19 costs.