

**Arguments For & Against Ballot Question #1 to Repair and Replace the Hubbardston
Center School Roof**

Annual Town Election June 30, 2020

Town of Hubbardston

Question 1: Shall the Town of Hubbardston be allowed to exempt from the provisions of Proposition two-and-one-half, so called, the amounts required to pay for the bonds issued in order to repair and replace the Hubbardston Center School Roof located at 8 Elm Street?

Effect of a “Yes” Vote: A “yes” vote will allow the Town to assess additional taxes, outside of the limits imposed by Proposition 2 ½, to provide the appropriation for the repair and replacement of the Center School roof.

Effect of a “No” Vote: A “no” vote will result in no appropriation for the repair and replacement of the Center School roof and shall not cause an increase of the amount to be raised through the taxation of real and personal property in the Town of Hubbardston.

IN FAVOR:

Nobody likes to pay more taxes. At the same time, the Town of Hubbardston does not want to pay more money than it has to. The Center School roof has failed and needs to be replaced. Thanks to a Massachusetts School Building Authority grant, Hubbardston has the opportunity to pay only 40% of the total cost of the repair, with the MSBA contributing the rest. However, to obtain this grant, Hubbardston must approve funding for the entire project and proposes to do so via a debt exclusion.

With a debt exclusion, taxes are raised temporarily during the duration of the borrowing period. Deciding whether to borrow over a 10, 15, or 20 year period will be a public process undertaken later - this warrant article authorizes the borrowing only – but for example, based on a 10 year debt exclusion to minimize interest paid, the estimated average tax increase for the average home in Hubbardston (assessed value of \$278,000) would be approximately \$87 per year for 10 years.

The MSBA grant is available this year but is not guaranteed in the future. Therefore, it is in Hubbardston’s best interest to move forward with the debt exclusion to take advantage of the grant program now. The Center School roof needs to be replaced, but rather than shouldering the entire cost, approving this debt exclusion will allow Hubbardston to minimize the total amount it has to pay. Therefore, approving the debt exclusion is advised.

Written by the Hubbardston Finance Committee

AGAINST:

Proposition 2½ imposes limitations on the amount a city or town may raise by taxation. Approval of the ballot question will allow the Town to exceed that limit for the period of borrowing needed

to repay the loan for repairing and replacing the Center School Roof. For example, an increase of \$150,000 (estimated annual repayment for a 10-year bond) in real estate and personal property taxes is estimated, in turn, to increase the tax bill for an average single-family residence assessed at \$278,987 by \$86.49 annually.

Written by Town Counsel

The Town of Hubbardston is required by the provisions of Chapter 370 of the Acts of 2010, entitled, “An Act Authorizing the Town of Hubbardston to Send Certain Information to the Voters Relative to Ballot Questions”, to provide to voters for each question presented to the voters on a Town ballot, arguments prepared by the principal proponents and opponents of the question. While efforts have been made to ensure that the factual assertions set forth herein are not inaccurate, please be advised that the statements do not reflect any endorsement by the Town generally, and the Town does not certify the truth or accuracy of any statement made.

In accordance with chapter 370 of the Acts of 2010 “An Act Authorizing the Town of Hubbardston to Send Certain Information to the Voters Relative to Ballot Questions,” the Board is required to make certain information available to voters. Arguments “for” and “against” will be published at least 10 days prior to the Election on the Town’s website, at each polling place, at the post office, and at the Town office building. Any resident wishing to receive a copy of the arguments by mail should notify the Town Clerk by calling 978-928-1400, x202 or sending an email to tclerk@hubbardstonma.us.