



He demanded local governments be weaned off state aid increases as a matter of policy, and said the state faced financial difficulties of its own that had built up and compounded over the years because previous administrations and legislatures had avoided dealing with them.

The ideas floated from time to time to turn away from over-reliance on property taxes include permitting levying municipal income or sales taxes, accompanied by a constitutionally mandated reduction or abolition of property taxes; a classification system under which commercial developments are taxed at a higher rate than residential properties; and the enactment of a state aid to education formula to provide every district with the same amount per pupil (\$7,500 has been mentioned frequently).

This level funding suggestion has drawn support as a way to provide relief to suburban districts that receive minimal aid, while ending the practice of spending as much as \$25,000 per pupil in some urban districts.

It is increasingly clear the Legislature will not sort through these or other ideas. Its record is one of responding to crises with short-term fixes, while avoiding coming to grips with the central problem.

A convention whose delegates would be free from political pressures and private interest demands could confront the issue, however. Critical mass may have been reached over property taxes, and a convention increasingly appears to be the best method to deal with it.