

Leah Gregg: Our city budget is a moral document



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Opinion

Northampton MA

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I am writing to express my pride as a resident of Ward 3 in having Quaverly Rothenberg as my City Council representative. There's an often quoted phrase that appears in the classic movie "Inherit the Wind" — that the job of a journalist is to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comforted. I would say it is also the job of a good politician. (We all know there are many politicians who do exactly the opposite.)

Northampton has long comforted itself with its progressive reputation. However, while important, it is also relatively easy to make statements about national or international issues that comfort us in the face of frightening events. It is much more challenging to look at our own budgets as moral documents. It is much harder to realize that BIPOC children, low-income children, and children with disabilities are disproportionately affected by cuts to the schools.

Rothenberg — and also my excellent School Committee representative, Emily Serafy-Cox — have been unwavering in their support of these families and children. Sometimes this has meant afflicting those who are comfortable with the status quo. However, in the words of a popular chant, I would like to suggest that this is precisely what democracy looks like.

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