

# Update Act 68

*The Valley Reporter*

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*Written by Win Smith*

To the Editor:

The Green Mountain Transit Agency is requesting additional funds from our local towns to expand service in The Valley. Sugarbush is strongly in favor of expanded service for two basic reasons. It enhances alternative transportation options for locals and guests who visit The Valley, which in turn makes us more competitive as a destination.

We compete with resort towns around the world and the better ones all provide extensive public transportation for their guests, so we believe it is important for all businesses in the Mad River Valley to want to see expanded service. But, equally important in this era of high energy prices and global climate changes, expanded GMTA service will benefit our fellow neighbors and reduce our carbon footprint.

How to fund this expansion is the question. Last year our new Clay Brook owners paid more than \$750,000

in new property taxes to the town of Warren and very few, if any, new town services were needed. Because of Act 68 most of this disappears into the bowels of Montpelier and is dispersed around the state. However, approximately 25 percent does return to the town, but can only be used for educational purpose so cannot be used to support the additional GMTA request.

This November we once again have an opportunity to have a dialog with those running for public office, and I, for one, will be most interested in their position on Act 68 and how we can revise a law that does not seem to have improved the quality of education and has only led to higher property taxes and less control by the local communities. Wouldn't it be nice to see Act 68 updated so that the property taxes for all could be reduced here in The Valley and additional funds could be available for needed initiatives like expanded GMTA service when projects like Clay Brook generate additional tax revenue for the town and The Valley?

Win Smith, Warren, president  
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