Twitter Thread by Dígame Concejal



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When I wrote an opinion piece for the New York Times, there was a pretty extensive fact-checking process (shout out to @jdesmondharris). Apparently, that is not the case at the Wall Street Journal, at least when a piece advances a highly partisan, fundamentally racist view...

So let's dig into just how wrong Bob Stefanowski's screed against Hartford is. To be clear, Hartford has a lot of problems! But Stefanowski diagnoses them all exactly backwards. He is consistently and astonishingly wrong...

So, yes, Harford has high violent crime *relative to other cities*. But crime has been at historic lows for a decade, so being the most dangerous doesn't mean "actually dangerous for middle class people who live in the suburbs."

(It is unsurprising that Stefanowski is more concerned with the mostly white, mostly nonresident staff of the Courant than with the Black and brown Hartford residents who *are* affected directly by violent crime.)

Bob is so close to getting it here. White flight and resource-hoarding (and the loss of manufacturing jobs to globalization and souther states with poor wages) *did* hurt the city badly.

Guess what: if you create an education system that puts all the neediest and poorest students together, in a city with a median household income that is half of the regional average, spending marginally more per student won't be enough!

Now Bob wades into pure fantasy. Bronin did not "embrace" the defund the police mantra. He explicitly rejected it, proposed a $1m reduction (and 5-year projected increases) and grudgingly acceded to the $2m reduction (after thousands of BLM protesters showed up at his house).

Hartford has more than double the average per-capita number of cops, and did not reduce that number after the budget was approved. The spike in gun crime began before the budget was approved and mirrored spikes in other cities that didn't cut public safety budgets.

This is my favorite part. Bob accurately notes that the city can't generate enough tax revenue because it hosts the large untaxed services that the whole region uses but doesn't pay for. Then he blames the mayor (who can't fix this) for asking the suburbs (who can) for help.

Dude! The "well-managed" towns exclude the poor and let impoverished cities provide needed services. THAT IS THE STRUCTURAL PROBLEM, WHICH THOSE CITIES CAN'T SOLVE.

The special interest here is suburban legislators and resists unwilling to give up segregated schools and fiscal free-riding! Hartford's taxes are high because half our taxable property is held by nonprofits and government and the state won't reimburse us adequately!

Districts wouldn't underperform if they were drawn to be economically and ethnically diverse, because they would then benefit from the political influence of affluent parents, and the motivation for those families to hoard their resources in segregated towns would decline.

OK, I'm done. Stefanowski is advocating for retrenchment the structural problems that have hurt Hartford because he's unwilling to recognize, like most suburbanites here, that he is complicit in an extractive, racist system of segregation.

I have trod this ground before: https://t.co/pAKTTwAE4J

> Practically every day, I wake up to a story about people inside Connecticut's impoverished cities squabbling over scraps because the town government system leaves them perennially underfunded and overburdened.
>
> — D\xedgame Concejal (@RSGAT) January 26, 2018

Indeed, I have trod this ground many times: https://t.co/gN45ScJwqI

> School integration based on voluntary opt-in by affluent white parents can't work: they judge school quality not by accepted measures, but by relative whiteness and affluence. CT's town-based school district system makes this a self-fulfilling prophecy. https://t.co/v2kD6TBkn2
>
> — D\xedgame Concejal (@RSGAT) January 29, 2020