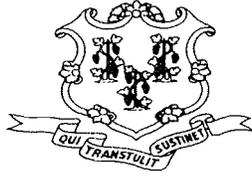


The Connecticut General Assembly



February 5, 2007

We are submitting this written testimony to you today regarding Senate Bill 299, *An Act Concerning the Recall of Mayor's Serving Four-Year Term*. We apologize for not being able to be here in person to testify, but obligations in our districts make it impossible.

As two members of the General Assembly who served on a city council while our mayor was indicted, convicted, and forced to resign from office. We are most concerned about this issue. This experience was a nightmare for our city. The absolute worst case scenario for any municipality is to have a sitting chief elected official be convicted of a crime.

Further complicating the situation that the city of Bridgeport faced was the length of the mayor's term. The indicted mayor had been elected to a 4 year term, without any fail safe to remove him from office. It was not until the mayor had been convicted and was forced to resign that a successor was eligible to put in place. Residents of the Bridgeport, who had put their trust in someone who had abused and broken that trust, were forced to rely on the judicial branch of government to remove the city's chief executive.

Because of our shared experience, we are fully supporting Senate Bill 299, *An Act Concerning the Recall of Mayor's Serving Four-Year Term*, in the hopes that no other municipality with a mayor elected to a four-year term will need to experience what we did.

We are advocating for a recall provision for mayors serving a four-year term only. Mayors and First Selectmen serving two-year terms are more or less term-limited already. They are held accountable to the voters every other year. This is not the case with anyone holding office for four years.

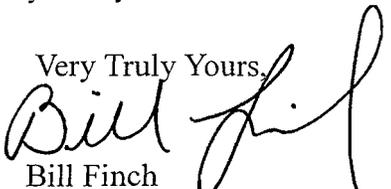
A recall provision is not something that should be easy to trigger. It should be used in only the most severe circumstances. Because recall is a drastic measure that should not be abused, we think that the following criteria should be used:

- Twenty percent of all eligible voters in a municipality sign a petition of recall within 30 days of filing for the petitions
- Sixty percent of all voters in the recall referendum would need to vote in favor of recalling the mayor for action to be taken

Public servants should be held to a high standard. Egregious behavior from anyone should not be tolerated, and SB 299 would put an additional public protection in place.

We appreciate your attention to our testimony, we apologize for not being able to be with you today personally, and we thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

Very Truly Yours,


Bill Finch
State Senator – 22nd District


Ed Gomes
State Senator – 23rd District