

TESTIMONY OF BONNIE THERRIEN
TOWN MANAGER, WETHERFIELD
RAISED BILL # 5674

Good Afternoon Members of the Planning and Development Committee.

Thank you very much for having this Public Hearing today on Raised Bill # 5674, which is An Act Concerning The Powers of Regional Council of Government. A part of this proposed bill, Section 5, deals with a hotel tax of 1% for municipalities. I wholeheartedly endorse this!

Currently, municipalities only have two ways to revenues for their taxpayers: the property tax and user fees. In Wethersfield, we have maxed out the users fees for programs and those services which only a few residents use from year to year. We have no other way to receive more funding, as the State Statutes do not allow municipalities to raise funds in any other manner.

This hotel tax would give towns and cities some dollars to offset their budgets. For Wethersfield, this could mean approximately \$75,000 in additional funding for our community, which could be used towards infrastructure upgrades and repairs to the

roads in and out of these roads as well as other services that could directly affect lodging – tourism events, attractions, etc.

Traveling across the country, there have been numerous times that I have had to pay a local and State lodging tax, and most of those taxes have been in the 1-2.5% range.

I know in the past there have been concerns about passing such a tax, as not all municipalities have lodging. Perhaps part of this tax could also go towards a regional pool, so that those cities and towns that do not have hotels/motels or B&B's could still receive funds from this proposed tax.

Towns and cities must have other ways to raise funds, so that we do not have to keep coming to you, our State legislators, to beg and cry for more and more State funding. I would ask you to take a serious look at this proposal and devise some way to pass a hotel tax or some other types of revenues that municipalities can raise on their own. This would certainly relieve us of the property tax burden for our taxpayers.

I know that members of the Council of Small Towns would be glad to work with you to develop these revenue stream ideas.

Thank you for your time.