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Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST)

Testimony before the Planning & Development Committee

March 2, 2009

- **SB-371, AN ACT CONCERNING INTERMUNICIPAL COOPERATION**

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) *supports SB-371, An Act Concerning Intermunicipal Cooperation*, which authorizes regional councils to establish programs of cooperation between member towns.

Connecticut's small towns and cities support initiatives to encourage voluntary regional cooperation to provide programs to meet the needs of local residents and businesses in a more efficient, cost-effective manner. As Connecticut's small towns and cities struggle to do more with less, many communities are exploring new opportunities to share resources to meet these growing needs.

SB-371 would authorize regional councils to develop programs that provide for the (1) sharing of property tax growth created by new economic development initiatives, (2) sharing of future growth in state sales tax revenue and distribution of any increase on a regional basis, (3) levying of regional taxes, such as sales and hotel taxes, and distribution of revenue from such regional taxes for regional infrastructure and economic development projects, (4) delivery of services and pooling of health insurance costs on a regional basis, (5) negotiation of regional contracts with municipal employee and teacher unions, and (6) making of land use decisions on regionally significant projects.

COST supports such efforts as long as they continue to be voluntary in nature and do not impose any new unfunded mandates on our towns and cities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Please contact me at 860-676-0770 if you have any questions.