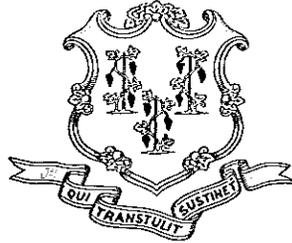


SENATOR ANDREW M. MAYNARD

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Toll-free 1-800-842-1420

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State of Connecticut

SENATE

Eighteenth District

Assistant Majority Whip

Chair

Veterans' Affairs

Member

Environment

General Law

Program Review & Investigations

Members of the Planning and Development Committee:

I write to urge your support of SB 383 An Act Exempting Regional Planning Organizations from Payment of Property Taxes.

The bill accomplishes one very simply objective. It would afford Council's of Government or Regional Planning Organizations who own property, namely their office space, the same tax exempt status that municipal property is currently afforded. RPO's already are exempt from Federal tax.

Councils of Government are supported by member town's municipal contributions. To require them to pay property taxes back to one of their own members is simply non-sensical.

Currently only one Council of Government or RPO owns its office space. Although the Town Council of the host community has passed an ordinance waiving the tax, the Tax Collector persists in his efforts to collect the tax.

The legislature acted to permit Council's of Government to purchase property in May 2000 (GS 4-124r). Additionally, citing GS 12-81 Sec(2) and 12-8 (4) The Attorney General states that property belonging to the state and a municipal corporation of the state are both tax exempt.

In his letter to the SE CT Council of Government dated March 27, 2008 the Attorney General supports the proposed action to clarify the status of property owned by RPO's and Councils of Government.

By adopting the proposed bill the legislature will achieve the desired clarity. I urge you to support this modest but important measure.

State of Connecticut



Hartford

March 27, 2008

RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
ATTORNEY GENERALRECEIVED
MAR 31 2008
SCCOGJames Butler, Executive Director
Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments
5 Connecticut Avenue
Norwich, CT 06360

Dear Mr. Butler:

I appreciated your visit and inquiry about the applicability of local property taxes to a statutorily-authorized regional body such as a regional council of governments. I well understand your concern about this important issue.

Quite simply, no statute or other law seems to resolve this issue clearly and unambiguously. As a matter of common sense and good government policy, I agree that property of a regional council of governments, authorized by state statute, should not be subject to municipal taxation. Unfortunately, our current laws regarding municipal taxation apparently do not address this issue, even indirectly. Property belonging to the state, and to a municipal corporation of the state, are both tax-exempt, Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 12-81(2) and 12-81(4). A regional council of governments is a political subdivision of the state, and is comprised of several different municipalities. The question is whether those facts qualify such a council as tax exempt. There is simply no clear answer in current law.

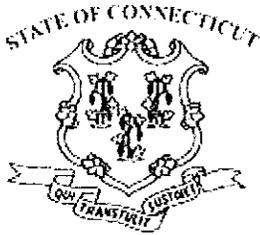
As I mentioned in our most recent conversation this week, I would be more than willing to support legislative change necessary to accomplish your goal. I understand that you have previously considered or proposed a measure to resolve this question. I strongly suggest that legislation would be the best way -- perhaps the only way -- to provide a definitive answer to this important question.

Very truly yours,

RICHARD BLUMENTHAL

RB/pas

c: Mayor Joseph Jaskiewicz



General Assembly
January Session, 2009

Proposed Bill No. 383
LCO No. 2193

Referred to Committee on Planning and Development

Introduced by:

SEN. MAYNARD, 18th Dist.

AN ACT EXEMPTING REGIONAL PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS FROM PAYMENT OF LOCAL PROPERTY TAXES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

That the general statutes be amended to exempt regional planning organizations from payment of local property taxes.

Statement of Purpose:

To provide the same tax exempt status to regional planning agencies that is provided to other governmental entities.



General Assembly

Amendment

February Session, 2008

LCO No. 5640



Offered by:

REP. REYNOLDS, 42nd Dist.

SEN. MAYNARD, 18th Dist.

To: Subst. House Bill No. 5324

File No. 228

Cal. No. 132

"AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE STUDY OF REGIONAL PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS."

1 After the last section, add the following and renumber sections and
2 internal references accordingly:

3 "Sec. 501. Section 4-124r of the general statutes is repealed and the
4 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2008, and*
5 *applicable to assessment years commencing on or after October 1, 2008*):

6 Any regional council of governments established under the
7 provisions of sections 4-124i to 4-124p, inclusive, may purchase real
8 property for the purposes of providing administrative office space for
9 such council. Any real property purchased and used by a regional
10 council of governments for such purposes shall not be subject to
11 taxation under chapter 203."