



TESTIMONY

of the

CONNECTICUT CONFERENCE OF MUNICIPALITIES

to the

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

March 6, 2009

CCM is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local governments - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent over 93% of Connecticut's population.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on the following bill of interest to towns and cities:

H. B. 6596, "An Act Concerning Notification Requirements for Halfway Houses"

CCM urges you to **amend this bill**, then favorably report it.

The bill would (1) require land use commissions to provide notice to chief elected officials and police and fire chiefs of proposed locations of halfway houses and other such facilities and (2) require the State to develop a statewide database of controversial sitings.

Section 1

It is right and proper that municipal chief elected officials and police and fire chiefs be notified of pending controversial sitings (CCM suggests changing the wording to "chief *executive* official," to ensure that town/city managers receive such notice). Such sitings often require additional municipal resources and focus. Such municipal officials should be made aware of locations, so that they can make the proper preparations. However, *it is much more appropriate for applicants to have the responsibility to notify chief executive officials and police and fire chiefs*. For applicants, it could just be a matter of copying such municipal officials on paperwork submitted. We urge the Committee to amend the bill accordingly.

-Over-

Section 2

CCM strongly supports this section of the bill, which would help ensure statewide coordination of controversial sitings, so that the same municipalities are not required to host such facilities.

In 1992 the Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee report entitled *Siting Controversial Land Uses*, among other things, concluded:

- • “There is no statewide coordination to avoid over development or promote equity in siting.”
- • “It is recommended that the Office of Policy and Management shall create and maintain a statewide registry...”
- • “Additional facilities to be included in the inventory shall be identified with the advice and assistance of representatives of local cities and towns.”

To date, none of this has happened.

The vast majority of controversial sitings are in the very few biggest cities. These areas are already providing the lion's share of affordable housing and social services. The State should adhere to the recommendations of Program Review and provide for statewide coordination regarding the siting of such facilities.

CCM urges you to amend Section 1 of the bill, and then favorably report it.

Thank you.

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