

**Testimony
Linda Hodge
First Selectman
Town of Colchester
Before the Public Health Committee
March 6, 2009**

**Re: SB-847, AN ACT CONCERNING THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET
RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING PUBLIC HEALTH**

The Town of Colchester *opposes* SB-847, which completely eliminates funding for local health districts.

Colchester, which has a population of just under 16,000, currently has a full-time Public Health Director and a full-time Sanitarian. Under this proposal, we would lose approximately \$15,000, which would make it difficult to fund a full-time sanitarian position. Without a full-time sanitarian, Colchester will not be able to meet its obligations under state law, which range from administrative paperwork requirements to child day care and food service inspections, well and septic permit processing, enforcement of cross connection violations and housing investigations as well as providing services during emergency situations to adjacent health districts.

The funding is also used to distribute health education materials regarding communicable and chronic diseases related to the needs of our population, such as breast cancer awareness.

SB-847 penalizes towns like Colchester that have worked hard to provide quality health services to residents in an efficient and responsive manner. Although we appreciate efforts to provide incentives to towns that want to pursue regional health districts and other regional programs, we do not believe that this is a viable option for Colchester at this time.

We therefore urge you to oppose the provisions in this bill which eliminate funding for local health districts.

Thank you.