



**Testimony of
Bart Russell, Executive Director
Connecticut Council of Small Towns
Presented to the Environment Committee
of the Connecticut General Assembly
March 1, 2010**

RE: HB-5122 (RAISED) AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PAINT STEWARDSHIP PILOT PROGRAM.

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) *strongly supports* H. B. No. 5122 (RAISED) **AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PAINT STEWARDSHIP PILOT PROGRAM.**

Many town residents have difficulty disposing of partially used cans of paint, stains, varnishes and thinners, which wind up collecting in basements, garages and attics. Oil-based paints, stains, varnishes and thinners generally have flammable, reactive or toxic ingredients and need to be handled carefully.

Many towns offer Household Hazardous Waste collection days to give residents the opportunity to dispose of these products safely. However, the town generally picks up the cost of coordinating, notifying residents, and staffing the collection days as well as processing the collected paint. As a result, not all towns have been able to fund such collection days or have not held them on a regular basis. This creates concerns because residents who are moving or tired of the clutter may inadvertently dispose of hazardous paint products in an unsafe manner.

HB-5122 creates a mechanism for reducing the municipal cost of operating these collections by requiring manufacturers to include a small fee on the sale of each can of paint. This will reduce municipal costs while expanding opportunities to help make it as convenient as possible for residents to recycle paints, stains and thinners that they no longer need.

Although HB-5122 only creates a pilot stewardship program, it is a welcome first step in developing a workable, fair process for safely disposing these products.