



# Memo

To: Honorable Members of the Planning and Development Committee  
 From: Jeff Bridges, Town Manager  
 Date: 3/10/2010  
 Re: M.O.R.E. Commission, Support for Mandate Relief and Alternative Revenue Streams for Local Government

I am testifying today to express my support for the bills put forth for consideration by the M.O.R.E. Commission. There has always been an understanding that issues decided at the state level have impacts at the local level, however; the work of the M.O.R.E. Committee has done an outstanding job clarifying this relationship and how local units of government struggle to meet mandated programs.

Local units of government in Connecticut have limited opportunities to raise additional revenue by means other than property tax. Although the property tax is historically the most stable and predictable, it can also be the most controversial and in many cases regressive. Providing additional revenue streams, can provide property tax relief and dedicated streams of revenue for particular projects, capital improvements, education enhancements, recreational opportunities and many other things.

In addition, the work of the M.O.R.E. Commission seeks to allow municipalities more financial independence and the capabilities to chart their own path. As we look to regionalism, there is not a one size fits all solution, each municipality is unique, with different needs, different collective bargaining agreements, and are at different evolutions on their service delivery systems. Each regional effort will be unique to the participants.

I firmly believe that strong and healthy local governments are one of the pillars to a strong and healthy state. The important work being done by the M.O.R.E. Commission seeks to strengthen local governments by providing new tools to use and fewer mandates to meet. This is key to helping local governments meet the needs of our communities.

Thank you for your consideration today.