



Testimony

Bart Russell, Executive Director

Connecticut Council of Small Towns

Before the Appropriations Committee

April 5, 2011

**RE: SB-1121 - AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE
DISTRIBUTION OF STATE FUNDS TO MUNICIPALITIES**

State aid to municipalities is a vital source of revenue to towns that is needed to fund critical programs and services, such as education, public safety, roads and bridges and other infrastructure. The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) therefore understands the need to study the distribution of state funds to municipalities, as called for under SB-1121.

In fact, we support the Governor's proposal to review the Education-Cost Sharing formula, as called for under HB-6385, and the review of special education funding issues called for under HB-6103. It is unclear how these studies correlate to the study outlined in SB-1121.

In addition, as drafted, the task force does not include any representatives from municipalities, such as small towns. We are concerned, then, that the task force will not benefit from this important perspective in recommending ways to revise distribution formulas for state funds. COST therefore recommends that the task force be broadened to ensure that municipalities, including small towns, have a seat at the table.