



TESTIMONY

of the

CONNECTICUT CONFERENCE OF MUNICIPALITIES

to the

GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

February 14, 2011

CCM is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent over 93% of Connecticut's population. We appreciate this opportunity to provide testimony to you on issues of concern to towns and cities.

Raised Bill 942 "*AAC the Integrity of Elections.*"

Among other things, this bill seeks to make several changes regarding elections including:

- 1) Requiring municipalities to create an emergency contingency plan for all polling places (Section 2).
 - CCM urges this section to be amended to clearly indicate that such emergency plan must be adopted by the legislative body of the municipality, and in the instance where the legislative body is a town meeting the Board of Selectmen, and officially accepted by the Secretary of the State.
- 2) Requiring municipalities to certify to the Secretary of the State the number of ballots ordered for a particular election cycle and that certain factors were considered (Section 5).
 - CCM urges this section be amended to require the Secretary of the State to create a form for local election officials to complete, asking all of the pertinent questions that would go into making the decision for how many ballots should be ordered. This would ensure consistency among municipalities in how the decision is achieved. In addition, the Secretary of the State should be required to "accept" or "reject" the certification.
- 3) Providing the Secretary of the State the authority to develop regulations for the training of moderators (Section 1).

- The Registrars of Voters have long been seeking consistency in training across the state for their positions and other election officials. CCM urges the Committee to convene a working group of the appropriate state and local officials to determine how best to implement such training to ensure it accomplishes its goal while not unnecessarily increasing costs or manpower time.
- 4) Allowing the Secretary of the State to remove moderators under certain circumstances (Section 4).
- CCM urges this section to be amended to clarify that such removal only be initiated at the request of the local registrar.

Elections are the cornerstone to our democratic process. While seeking to improve the system and protect the public trust, it is important to carefully balance the state and local authorities and ensure that any changes made achieve the desired goal without just adding more layers of bureaucracy.

CCM urges the committee to amend this bill as suggested and favorably report it.

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If you have any questions, please contact Kachina Walsh-Weaver, Senior Legislative Associate of CCM via email kweaver@ccm-ct.org or via phone (203) 498-3026.