

Ralph Eno  
First Selectman  
Town of Lyme  
Before the Labor Committee  
March 10, 2011

Senator Prague, Rep. Zalaski, members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to comment in **support** of SB-990, **An Act Concerning the Prevailing Rate of Wages.**

This bill is an important step in providing towns with some much needed relief from unfunded state mandates. It is also critical to moving forward with local building projects that have been too costly under prevailing wage laws.

In these difficult economic times, the state must give municipalities more control over key elements in their budgets. Capital projects are one of those elements.

The prevailing wage law, in which the state dictates to towns the wages they must pay for work on capital projects, has been unchanged since 1991. The law requires all towns to pay the prevailing wage on new projects costing more than \$400,000, and improvements to existing facilities costing more than \$100,000. The prevailing wage laws significantly increase the cost of building projects, increasing a town's costs considerably.

It has been 20 years since the prevailing wage thresholds were touched and in those years construction costs have gone up dramatically. Legislation adjusting the prevailing wage thresholds is long overdue.

The reality is, a lot of contractors in Lyme and neighboring communities won't bid prevailing wage jobs and this is unfair. We need to ensure a level playing field for our local contractors who support our community.

**I therefore urge your support for SB-990.**