



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

## City of Middletown

CONNECTICUT 06457

SEBASTIAN N. GIULIANO  
MAYOR

March 21, 2011

RE: Written Testimony- March 21, 2011 Public Hearing on Unfunded Mandates

Dear Co-chairs and Committee Members,

The need for reforming the practice of unfunded state mandates is of significant importance to the City of Middletown and its taxpayers.

Currently, there are over 1,200 state mandates as identified by the Conference of Cities and Municipalities. These unfunded mandates are an expense where the bill ultimately falls on the residential and business property tax payers in each municipality. These added mandates not only add to local budget burdens, but crowd out other important local needs and prevent local decision-making from dictating local budget priorities. With over 26% of Middletown's grand list exempt from paying property taxes this burden falls even harder on our tax paying seniors and families.

Relief from some of these mandates is important to the fiscal recovery of towns and cities. Local governments support the objectives of many of these mandates – but oppose the State's failure to pay for them, and strongly suggest that the State adjust, postpone, or repeal certain mandates particularly during the current economic climate.

Furthermore, Middletown seeks relief not just from these mandates, but any reform will help offset the city's loss of Aetna and the demolition of its Middletown facility, which previously contributed 5.6% to the value of our grand list.

The 2011 General Assembly has a unique opportunity to make positive structural changes to the operation of government, changes that will bring significant cost savings. Mandates relief alone, however, is not the panacea for local budget woes, nor prevent local property taxes from spiking. Mandates relief must be concurrent with maintaining state aid in order to hold the line on property taxes. Connecticut's local property taxpayers – residential and business – urge the new Governor and General Assembly to enact comprehensive reform of state mandates. Middletown's local property taxpayers deserve no less.

Sincerely,

Mayor Sebastian N. Giuliano  
City of Middletown