



TESTIMONY
of the
CONNECTICUT CONFERENCE OF MUNICIPALITIES
to the
VETERANS' AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

February 10, 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.

S.B. 126 **"An Act Concerning Property Tax Exemptions for Disabled Veterans"**
S.B. 377 **"An Act Concerning Interest Owed on Property Taxes by Members of the Armed Forces on Active Duty"**

S.B. 126 would mandate special property tax treatment for disabled veterans.

It is no secret that towns and cities, along with the State, are struggling during this unprecedented recession. Hometowns need their state leaders to focus on means to help save local budgets money – and not new mandates that will cost additional money.

S.B. 377 would permit municipal tax collectors to waive any amount of interest accrued on unpaid property taxes and owed by a municipal resident, provided such resident was a member of the armed forces on active duty at the time such taxes were due and during the time period when such interest accrued.

A worthy proposal, S.B. 377 would establish a "mandate in effect" by establishing the "option" that many municipalities will feel compelled to enact, especially when the country is involved in two wars. In a situation such as this, the State seeks to buy good will from a segment of the public – with local property tax dollars. Simply put, your hometown cannot afford such a new unfunded state mandate as this bill would impose.

CCM urges the Committee to obtain detailed fiscal analyses on the impact these well-intended proposals would have on our communities -- particularly on local programs and services -- before voting on these bills.

CCM urges the Committee to **hold these proposals** until further analyses are conducted.

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If you have any questions, please contact Bob Labanara of CCM at rlabanara@ccm-ct.org.