

TOWN OF CORNWALL

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Dear Labor and Public Employees Committee:

Recent flooding conditions in Cornwall have prevented me from coming to testify in Hartford today in support the three bills:

***S.B. No. 989 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING RESERVE FUND BALANCES AND CHANGES TO MUNICIPAL BINDING ARBITRATION – Prohibits fund balances from being considered for purposes of municipal binding arbitration.**

***S.B. No. 990 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE PREVAILING RATE OF WAGES – Increases the prevailing wage thresholds from \$100,000 to \$200,000 for renovations and \$400,000 to \$800,000 for new construction.**

***H.B. No. 6409 (RAISED) AN ACT REQUIRING NEUTRAL MUNICIPAL ARBITRATORS BE MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN ARBITRATION ASSOCIATION – Requires arbitrators to be AAA Certified to enhance the integrity of the binding arbitration process.**

As a group, these bills would provide relief from onerous, outdated and expensive mandates for municipalities throughout Connecticut. I have been a First Selectman for almost 20 years and both COST and CCM have been asking for this relief for that period of time. Our towns and our state are more financially stressed than any time in recent history. Clearly if Connecticut taxpayers are going to be asked for more “shared sacrifice”, then tax dollars must be spent wisely. Reform of prevailing wage laws and binding arbitration which is being modestly proposed in these bills would help make municipalities more financially efficient and responsible.

Sincerely,

Gordon M. Ridgway
First Selectman

Cc: Governor Dannel Malloy, Senator Andrew Roraback, Representative Roberta Willis, Barton Russell, Executive Director COST