



CCM 2012 Testimony

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COMMERCE COMMITTEE

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The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (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 90% of Connecticut's population. We appreciate the opportunity to testify on bills of interest to towns and cities.

CCM *opposes* House Bill 5341 "*An Act Concerning Additional Business Rights Related to Zoning Enforcements*"

While CCM appreciates the intent behind this proposal, it would impose administrative and other burdens on towns and cities.

The proposal sets arbitrary deadlines for municipal officials to reply to applications. If officials fail to respond within such deadlines, the applications would be deemed approved.

The proposal doesn't consider the economic situation facing towns and cities. Connecticut towns and cities have made uncomfortable budget cuts and are making preparations for additional cuts. In Connecticut's central cities and poorer towns, the situation is increasingly grave and dire. Deep cuts in services and significant layoffs have occurred in these communities - with more service cuts and layoffs to come. Municipalities must still provide the services residents depend on for education, public safety and infrastructure maintenance, regardless of the economy.

Towns and cities are being required to do more with less. Towns may not have the staffing to meet the deadlines prescribed in the bill. And, there are serious public safety and welfare implications to automatically deeming building permit and certificate of occupancy applications approved.

CCM is unaware of any statewide problem that would necessitate this proposal.

We urge the Committee to study this proposal thoroughly before proceeding.

CCM urges the Committee to **take no action on this bill.**



If you have any questions, please contact Donna Hamzy, Legislative Associate of CCM
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