



**Testimony
Bart Russell
Executive Director
Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST)
Before the Finance Committee
March 12, 2012**

RE: SUPPORT - SB-354, An Act Concerning Enhanced 9-1-1 Services

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) supports **SB-354** which imposes a fifty cent fee on each purchase of prepaid wireless telecommunications services from a retailer to pay for the enhanced emergency 9-1-1 program. This is a matter of simple equity requiring all users to pay for supporting the E 9-1-1-1 system.

Providing additional funding is critical to maintaining the integrity of the current E-911 system. COST supports the mechanism outlined in the bill or an increase in the statutory cap. Additional funding is needed to help offset costs associated with updating and modernizing the hardware and software needed to run the E 9-1-1 system effectively. This bill should not be seen as an alternative to proposed bills which request that the fifty cent cap be raised. This bill could also be used to raise the maximum cap for all other non-pre-paid telecommunication users to the amount needed to install and run the next generation of the 911 system as determined by PURA, but in no case more than \$1.00 per month.

To help enhance public safety communication in Connecticut and in our local communities, COST support SB-354, and recommend that the bill be modified to allow PURA to raise the rate for other users to support at robust next generation 911 system