



CCM 2012 Testimony

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GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION & ELECTIONS

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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 ***supports sections 47-56*** of House Bill 5027 "*An Act Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations Concerning the Elimination, Consolidation and Modification of Various Boards and Commissions.*"

Sections 47-56 of HB 5027 would, among other things: (1) eliminate the Commission for Education Technology Advancement and replace it with the Commission for Technology Advancement; (2) provide the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities an appointment to the Commission; and (3) add "municipal facilities" to the list of parties involved in the creation and management of a reliable and secure network.

CCM thanks the Governor for recognizing the need for the addition of "***municipal facilities***" to the entities authorized by state statute to interconnect through the state's upgraded fiber network and provides municipal representation on the Commission involved with the network.

CCM has long advocated for high speed connections for municipalities to use among their own facilities, to all other towns, and to the state, as well as outbound connections to the world through broadband Internet connections. By taking advantage of its huge buying power and federal funding, the state has now initiated and will soon successfully implement a statewide fiber network with the capacity to achieve this long-held goal of "wiring" the entire state down to the smallest locality. The value of any network is established by the number of all entities connecting to it (Metcalf's Law). Including "municipal facilities" will further enhance the value of the network.

In order to generate the maximum potential of the State's investment, CCM urges the new Commission to make sustained efforts to locate and generate funding opportunities for the municipalities to expand and sustain their connections to the state's new network. While previous programs such as the federal e-rate initiative to wire one school and one library in each town were successful, they were limited and without further funding; the towns were left without the resources necessary to wire all municipal facilities and schools.

Including municipal access to the State-wide FiberNet is a very encouraging legislative step -- we look forward to working together with the new Commission to assure its success and enhance the economic competitiveness of the state and all its municipalities.

CCM is pleased to be offered an appointment to the Commission and thanks the Governor for ensuring that municipalities are included in the discussions focused around technology advancement in this state.

CCM urges the committee to **favorably report this bill.**

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