



State of Connecticut

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REGULATIONS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Planning and Development Committee Friday, March 2, 2012

Good morning Chairmen Cassano and Gentile, Ranking Members Fasano and Aman;

I am Kevin Kelly, State Senator from the 21st District representing Monroe, Seymour, Shelton and Stratford.

I am here today to testify in support of **HB 5316** – An Act Requiring A Two-Thirds Vote Of The General Assembly To Enact Or Expand Municipal Mandates And Authorizing A Review Of Certain Municipal Budgets.

Connecticut towns struggle day to day to make ends meet. In an effort to provide municipal relief and prevent unnecessary mandates I fully support the initiatives put forth in this bill. HB 5316 would do the following:

- 1) Enact a 2/3 majority vote requirement for all future mandates, especially unfunded ones, which will impact our municipalities directly. This would both prove to our towns and cities that we are listening to their requests for help.
- 2) Enact an audit requirement for any municipality larger than 30,000 residents which receives over 35% of its annual operating budget through grants-in-aid from the state. This would ensure that the financial support sent out from Hartford is being properly used and monitored.

Due to the fiscal troubles faced by the State of Connecticut over the past several years, municipalities need all the help they can get. Our towns are further hurt by the issues of increased burdens on residents and citizens of Connecticut through increased utility bills, mortgage troubles, and general cost of living.

There are estimated to be some 1,200 mandates, many of which are not funded by the state. Every time we pass legislation that shifts a government cost onto our towns we must think long and hard about that cost. This bill would create that much needed review before the legislature enacts a bill to shift the government cost to a town. Connecticut municipalities are stretched beyond normal limits, and we as a legislature should be doing everything we can to help them.