



# OLR RESEARCH REPORT

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## RECALL OF MUNICIPAL ELECTED OFFICIALS

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You asked whether Connecticut municipalities may recall municipal elected officials and if not, whether the General Assembly considered legislation during the last 10 years authorizing them to do so.

The state Supreme Court ruled in *Simons v. Canty* (195 Conn. 524 (1985)) that municipalities do not have the authority to recall—a procedure under which elected officials can be removed from office at an election called for this purpose by a specified number of voters. Specifically, the court found that municipalities lack recall authority because (1) under the state Constitution’s home rule provision (Art. X, § 1), they have only those powers expressly granted to them by the General Assembly; (2) the General Assembly has not enacted legislation conferring such authority; and (3) the authority is not implied in other municipal powers. However, five Connecticut municipalities (Bristol, Milford, New Haven, Stratford, and Westport) have recall authority, granted by special act before the enactment of the state Constitution’s home rule provision.

Since 2003, the General Assembly has considered 12 bills authorizing municipalities to recall certain municipal elected officials. Of these, five were voted out of committee but died on the calendar (sHB 5698 (2002); HB 5092 (2003); sHB 6242 (2007); sHB 5894 (2008); and sHB 5827 (2009)).

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