



# Town of Coventry

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March 5, 2012

Transportation Committee  
Room 2300, Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: Raised Bill 5370  
Local Bridge Program

Dear Transportation Committee Chairs and Members:

I am writing in favor of Raised Bill 5370 concerning re-activating the Local Bridge program. Small towns very much appreciate the State reviewing and modernizing this once-robust program. The modification will allow this program to work to leverage Federal Bridge programs where applicable, and for smaller non-Federal bridges, allow towns to make necessary repairs in a more cost-efficient manner.

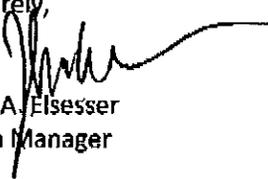
We appreciate the willingness to consider some bonding and to allow the use of promissory notes to avoid the expense of local bonding. The transportation network involves interstates, state routes and local roads so it seems appropriate to bring all three parties together into a program to repair and replace unsafe bridges.

We also ask that the Transportation Committee work to nudge various State agencies into a streamlined permitting process since it can take up to five years to gain approval to proceed. We ask your committee to review the process since length of permitting increases the cost and jeopardizes the public as unsafe structures continue to age and deteriorate.

It seems that a less cumbersome process can and should be developed to replace existing bridges. For example the Town Engineer will hire a Town's Consulting Engineer and coordinate with the State's Bridge Consulting Engineer and CT DOT's Project Engineers. Once hired these four engineers coordinate the project with CT DEEP's Engineers. So when asked how long it takes to re-build a bridge the simple answer is one year per engineer. While we support RB 5370 and appreciate the State's partnership, we need your help to also get the permit process back on track.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

  
John A. Eisesser  
Town Manager

