



CCM 2013 Testimony

900 CHAPEL STREET, 9th FLOOR, NEW HAVEN, CT 06510-2807 PHONE (203) 498-3000 FAX (203) 562-6314

Your source for local government management information www.ccm-ct.org

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

March 4, 2013

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 92% of Connecticut's population. We appreciate the opportunity to testify on bills of interest to towns and cities.

CCM opposes HB 6505 "An Act Concerning Parameters for Fees for Extracurricular Activities at Public Schools"

The bill would place restrictions on the assessment of fees for extracurricular activities at public schools. While the intention of this bill may be good, to ensure all students have the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities, the continued imposition of new under- and un-funded mandates have put municipalities in the position of having to either eliminate certain activities or charge for them. It is a very sad commentary on the state of our education finance system.

Towns and cities are currently facing the potential for significant state aid reductions, based on the current proposed budget, not to mention the looming possibility of a greater than \$700 million loss in revenues if elimination of the car tax is indeed implemented.

And, as CCM has testified to before, the cost for public education in our state for the current school year is over \$10 billion, and municipal property taxpayers already:

- Fund 51.4 percent of that amount (more than \$5 billion). The State contributes an estimated 42.9 percent and the federal government 5.2 percent.
- Pay at least \$0.62 of every \$1.00 raised in property taxes toward PreK-12 public education.
- Pay at least 60 percent of Connecticut's \$1.7 billion in special-education costs.
- Pick-up the bill for numerous other state-mandated education priorities that are not fully funded by the State.

Until state financing of education comes up to par and substantive mandates relief is provided to towns and cities, we will continue to find ourselves in situations where the only way to maintain a program is to charge for it. Imposing a mandate such as this may leave local boards of education with the only option of not offering the extracurricular activity at all.

CCM urges the committee to ***take no action*** on this bill.



If you have any questions, please contact Kachina Walsh-Weaver, State Relations Manager,
kwash-weaver@ccm-ct.org or (203) 710-9525.

