



CCM 2013 Testimony

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EDUCATION COMMITTEE

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

CCM has concerns with the costs associated with implementing SB 1002 "An Act Concerning Community Schools".

The bill would create yet another new unfunded mandate on local boards of education in alliance districts by requiring them to establish full service "community schools".

While Section 7 of the bill provides for grant funding to achieve this mandate, the language also indicates that such funds will only be made "within available appropriations." Based on the current state underfunding of education, it is anticipated that local governments will shoulder this as yet another new under- or un-funded mandate.

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.

If the policy position contained within this bill is a priority of the state, then it should ensure full funding to implement it. Otherwise, CCM urges the committee to **take no action** on this bill.



If you have any questions, please contact Kachina Walsh-Weaver, State Relations Manager,
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