



Town of Stafford

Connecticut

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Written Testimony SB843

March 4, 2013

State of Connecticut
Finance and Revenue Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 2E
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing you today to express my concerns over the restructuring of the motor vehicle tax. While I agree that the motor vehicle tax may be an unfair tax for many reasons, it is part of the tax structure we have in Connecticut. Unfortunately, the Governor's plan puts more financial burden on the middle class who are already struggling to heat their homes, pay their mortgages and keep up with the rising cost of every day goods and services. I am certain the plan will have a negative impact on communities throughout the State. It will leave a shortfall in the municipal budgets to be subsidized by higher taxes on real estate and personal property. In municipalities like Stafford with a high concentration of multi-family rental properties it will be devastating. By not collecting the motor vehicles tax from tenants of these properties it will cause rents to escalate as a result of the higher taxes deferred to real estate. It will cause the burden of education funding to rely solely on real estate and personal property.

Our assessor has estimated this plan will cost the Town of Stafford \$2.3 Million in revenue. This represents approximately 10% of the total tax revenue collected by the Town of Stafford. Stafford, as many other municipalities is struggling to maintain a fiscally responsible budget based on its needs, not its revenue. Municipal leaders are on the front line of making tough decisions when it comes to cutting programs and positions. In the past few years Stafford has eliminated one resident trooper, a town administrator, and have not filled other vacant positions but have reassigned the duties to other employees. Any revenue taken from the municipalities will result in program and personnel cuts in municipal services, public safety, and education.

I urge the Committee to look closely at these proposals and their long term impacts on the municipalities; and help protect Stafford and other rural communities from having our already over burdened budgets arbitrarily devastated.

Respectfully,

Richard Shuck
First Selectman