HARWINTON, CONNECTICUT
INCORPORATED 1737

TOWN OF HARWINTON

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Michael R. Criss
First Selectman
Town of Harwinton
Before the Finance Committee
March 4, 2013

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in ***opposition*** to **SB-843, AN ACT CONCERNING REVENUE ITEMS TO IMPLEMENT THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET**

As First Selectman of Harwinton, I have been working to improve the efficiency of our local government and be more responsive to our residents and businesses. Unfortunately, like many towns, we are struggling to find ways to reduce municipal costs to address concerns with declining revenues and flat funding of state aid to municipalities.

By exempting motor vehicles with an assessed value of $20,000 from the property tax, SB-843 would impose an untenable burden on our homeowners, renters and local businesses. There is no way that we can make sufficient cuts in our local budgets to offset the loss of this revenue. In Harwinton, the elimination of the car tax will result in a $ 1,170,000.00 loss of revenue, roughly10% of our local budget. As a result, taxes on homeowners and local businesses will increase; rents will have to increase as well, undermining our local economy.

I urge lawmakers to oppose the elimination of the car tax. It's time to help our towns/cities and not crush them. We have a limited tax base with an aging community; the above revenue loss will force us to raise everyone a minimum of $352 a household before local budgets or any of the other proposed cuts to municipalities. The State can no longer not fund or under fund municipalities and then try to balance the State budget on our backs.

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