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**Testimony of the City of New Haven
Before the General Law Committee**

Regarding

**SB 880 AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL POLICE DEPARTMENTS AND THE
RENEWAL OF CERTAIN ALCOHOLIC LIQUOR PERMITS**

Submitted by

Rebecca Bombero, Deputy Chief of Staff

February 26, 2013

Senator Doyle, Rep. Baram, thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of SB 880 An Act Concerning Municipal Police Departments and the Renewal of Certain Alcoholic Liquor Permits. In 2011 the General Assembly created a Pilot in the City of New Haven which allows the Chief of Police the opportunity to comment on liquor permit application renewals. The purpose of this bill would be to extend the pilot period to allow for the consideration of the report that is due to the legislature in February of 2014 prior to the sunset of the program and allow for due consideration of the continuation and expansion of the program.

In 2011 the City came to the General Assembly for help in dealing with problem bars as chronic issues existed at some liquor establishments in New Haven ranging from persistent drug dealing, to violence, to even homicide. The police department had spent considerable resources investigating activity at some of these establishments, yet when the establishment applied for a liquor permit renewals, the police department was often in the dark. With over one hundred establishments in the City with liquor permits, this bill allows the department to be notified when a liquor permit is up for renewal and to submit comment for consideration. The municipal police departments are the ones responding to and investigating problems at these establishments, and have the most knowledge of activities occurring at such establishments.

While the City has not had to submit comment on the renewal of a liquor permit, the ability to do so has improved relationships between law enforcement and local establishments. We now find willing partners in many bars when police offer suggestions on how to deal with problems at closing or when we suggest that additional security measures be undertaken. While there will always be room for improvement, in the past year there has been considerable improvement in the civility present at our liquor establishments, we feel in large part due to responsible management motivated by the new liquor permit renewal requirements.

As currently drafted the bill would extend the pilot period to June 30, 2014, but would also delay the report. We ask the committee to keep the original report date of February 2014 in place to allow for the continuous application of this program. When the General Assembly considers the full report we recommend that this opportunity then be given to every municipality in the state in 2014.

Thank you for your consideration.