Testimony
Betsy Gara
Connecticut Council of Small Towns
Before the Labor Committee
February 26, 2013

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) urges you to ***oppose*** **HB-6434 - AN ACT CONCERNING VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS AND AMBULANCE COMPANIES AND THE DEFINITION OF EMPLOYER UNDER THE STATE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ACT.**

HB-6434 imposes another layer of costly regulation on volunteer fire departments and ambulance companies. These volunteer organizations are vital to protecting public health and safety in our small communities.

The CT Supreme Court recently held that private employers, including volunteer fire departments and ambulance companies, are not subject to state OSHA laws but, instead, must comply with federal OSHA laws. By overturning this decision, HB-6434 subjects volunteer fire departments and volunteer ambulance companies to an additional unnecessary and duplicative layer of regulation.

Volunteer fire departments and ambulance companies are struggling to maintain services during very difficult economic times. Adding another layer of bureaucracy to the operation of such volunteer organizations will make it difficult for them to provide critical public safety and first responder services in their communities.

COST urges you to reject this bill.

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