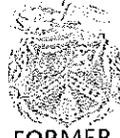


DAVID M. WALKER

202-679-0257
~~(202) 512-5500~~



FORMER
COMPTROLLER GENERAL
OF THE UNITED STATES

February 8, 2013

Chairman Steve Cassano and
Chairman Jason Rojas
Planning and Development Committee
Room 2100 Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Messrs Cassano and Rojas:

As a former U.S. Comptroller General and a concerned citizen of Bridgeport, I am writing to strongly support H.R. 5724. This legislation is designed recognize sound governance practices and restore self-governance to citizens of local municipalities.

Based on my over 40 years of business, government and non-profit experience, including significant governance experience, I believe that H.R. 5724 should be adopted for several important reasons:

First, allowing city or town employees to serve on local legislative bodies represents a clear violation of best governance practices. Municipal employees have significant conflicts of interest that cannot be resolved through disclosure or recusal. For example, overall budget allocations, compensation arrangements, and city restructuring initiatives can have significant implications for city employees and their families.

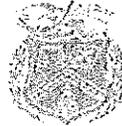
Second, while investors and contributors can decide not to invest in companies or contribute to charities if they have poor governance practices, taxpayers do not have any such discretion in connection with local taxes. Therefore, local government governance practices need to set a very high standard in order to protect the interests of current and future taxpayers.

Third, sound democratic principles demand that voters in individual municipalities be able to decide key issues relating to local governance. By allowing city employees to be on Bridgeport's City Council represents a clear violation of the current City Charter, which was ratified by the voters of Bridgeport.

Fourth, allowing city employees to be on City and Town Councils serves to undercut an important check and balance on the power of the local chief executive. After all, the Mayor is their ultimate boss in their employee capacity.

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The City of Bridgeport and many other Connecticut cities and towns face serious financial and other challenges, including huge and growing unfunded employee retirement obligations. Having an effective governance system is essential to successfully meeting these challenges. If a City's or Town's governance system is not properly designed and effectively implemented, it will have serious adverse consequences on the municipality and its citizens over time. It can also result in significant local obligations being assumed by the state over time.

H.R. 5724 is designed to resolve a fundamental flaw in the Connecticut's governance practices for local governments. I respectfully request that you support adoption of this important piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "DMW", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

David M. Walker
Former U.S. Comptroller General
Bridgeport, CT

cc: General Planning Committee Members