



**Testimony
Betsy Gara
Executive Director
Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST)
Before the
Planning & Development Committee
February 20, 2013**

**SB-817 - AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PROPERTY TAX PROGRAM TO ENCOURAGE
THE PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC BARNES**

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) supports SB-817, which authorizes municipalities to enact a program that will provide property tax benefits to property owners who agree to preserve historic agricultural structures.

Historic barns add to the scenic beauty of our small towns. They are also a charming but important reminder of Connecticut's rich agricultural heritage. Unfortunately, according to the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, "Barns are disappearing from the Connecticut landscape... With each barn that is lost another piece of the state's rich agricultural history disappears."

By authorizing towns to provide property tax benefits to property owners who agree to preserve historic barns, SB-817 will help make further progress in preserving this physical link to our heritage.

COST urges adoption of SB-817.

Connecticut Council of Small Towns
1245 Farmington Avenue, 101 West Hartford, CT 06107
860-676-0770 860-676-2662 Fax