



Office Of The First Selectman
Town of Seymour

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W. Kurt Miller

First Selectman

Raised Bill No. 6518 presents some potentially serious issues for the Town of Seymour as a municipality seeking to provide its residents with the highest level of service at the best rates possible. Perhaps the best way I can explain my concern is to explain the difficulty I had in reviewing the bill itself. I attempted to parse the bill myself to determine the implications for the Town, but I found myself unable to read through the legalese. I referred it to Town Counsel to try and simplify it so that I could understand it. What he told me was troubling. In effect, oversight that is currently provided at the State level would be transferred to the municipal level. While this seemed innocuous to me, Town Counsel explained the potential implications and the gravity of the changes to it.

I'm concerned that, as proposed, the bill place EMS service providers at the whim of politics. If municipalities were placed in charge of oversight, EMS provider selection becomes open to graft and other forms of corruption. For example, if oversight were moved to the towns, I don't think the average citizen, who would be eligible to serve on the committee, could understand their responsibilities given the complexity of the bill. If they had difficulty, they would be forced to turn to someone with EMS experience whose advice would be understandably biased at best and self-serving at worst. In a similar vein, the proposed regulatory system would allow for a more blatant form of corruption. If a disreputable politician with a complicit board decide to solicit or accept bribes, there would be nothing to stop them. This could result in decreased service level at increased cost for residents. The changes could also result in an environment in which service providers are unwilling to upgrade equipment because of the likelihood that they could be replaced with a new administration. Finally, by eliminating most of the language governing price controls, it becomes easier for larger service providers to force out smaller ones by offering discounted rates that smaller providers cannot afford. While this might be in the interest of the municipalities in the short run, the monopolistic environment it would create would surely be detrimental in the long run.

Given the complexity of the bill and the changes it makes regarding oversight, I cannot help but think that, as proposed, the bill will negatively impact municipalities. Although any system is susceptible to corruption to some degree, by moving everything to the municipal level the fox will be guarding the hen house. I am concerned about the potential impacts of the bill and I implore you not to accept the bill as proposed.

Respectfully submitted,

W. Kurt Miller

First Selectman, Town of Seymour