



CCM 2013 Testimony

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ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

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The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent over 92% of Connecticut's population. We appreciate the opportunity to testify on bills of interest to towns and cities.

CCM ***opposes*** Raised House Bill 6439 "*An Act Concerning the Disposal and Collection of Unused Medication.*"

Among other things, this bill would mandate municipal police departments to (1) maintain a secure lock-box for the collection of unwanted pharmaceuticals, (2) make it accessible to the public twenty-four hours a day, and (3) arrange for the transport of the unwanted pharmaceuticals to a biomedical waste treatment facility.

While CCM supports the intent of the bill, to keep pharmaceuticals out of waste water systems, we continue to have concerns with the (a) expense associated with purchasing the secure lock-boxes and transfer the contents for disposal; (b) administrative burden it will place on municipal police departments to monitor and manage the boxes; and (c) potential liability should anything happen to the box or its contents.

The Prevention Network has been actively working with the Department of Consumer Protection over the last several years to implement a ***voluntary program*** to achieve the goals of this bill. The thirteen regional action councils have worked to place more than 29 lock-boxes around the state, with more in the process of being implemented. The cost of these boxes range around \$1000 -- not to mention the cost, responsibility and liability associated with maintaining them.

Towns and cities are facing the potential for significant state aid reductions, based on the current proposed budget, not to mention the looming possibility for a greater than \$500 million loss in revenues if elimination of the car tax is indeed implemented. Unfunded state mandates should never be placed on local governments, no matter the size or purpose, but it is even more critical in light of the current fiscal situation.

While proponents of this bill have indicated there are ways to cover the initial investment costs associated with the lock-box -- through advertisement -- there is no guarantee that this will always be successful and it does not address the ongoing transportation and administrative expenses and liability exposure. **With an active, and successful, voluntary program already in place, no new mandate should be placed on local police departments.** Rather, support and funding for the current voluntary program should be provided so its reach could be expanded.

CCM urges the committee to ***take no action on this bill.***

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If you have any questions, please contact Kachina Walsh-Weaver, State Relations Manager,
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