



# OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

TONI N. HARP

50th Mayor of New Haven Connecticut



**Testimony of the City of New Haven  
Before the Appropriations Committee  
Regarding  
Office of Policy and Management (OPM) Budget**

Submitted by  
**Toni N. Harp, Mayor**

February 11, 2014

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Representative Walker, Senator Bye, ranking members and members of the Appropriations Committee:

I appreciate your giving me the opportunity to offer testimony on the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) budget and specifically, on municipal grants. I am very familiar with the difficult choices you will have to make before the end of the 2014 legislative session. It wasn't long ago, I was sitting where you are now, so I am well aware of the hard decisions you will have to make.

The fiscal situation in our state for this budgetary year is very positive. However, for cities and towns there is still the struggle of paying for services without raising taxes on our constituents. New Haven, especially, has a difficult time because of all the tax-exempt property in the city. We have made responsible cuts year after year, cuts to staff, cuts to programs and has delayed upgrading equipment. Any more cuts, I'm afraid, could cut into the quality of life for our residents.

Without a substantial increase in state grants, I can foresee fewer police and firefighters, fewer libraries and youth programs. And, after our recent winter storms and frigid temperatures, we do not want to see our Department of Public Works have fewer workers using our antiquated equipment that hasn't be replaced in many years.

While state funding for PILOTs has remained flat over the last several years, reimbursement rates are continuing to fall. Although statutory reimbursement thresholds are 77% for college and hospital property, 45% for state owned property and 100% for jails and prisons, only a fraction is reimbursed to New Haven. And, because it is well below the statutory reimbursement threshold, New Haven has had a severe reduction in its workforce, reducing the quality of city services for New Haven residents.

I am asking the Appropriations Committee to begin restoring funding ratios to New Haven that are currently 35% for college and hospitals, and 26% for state owned property.

Thank you for your time. I am available for any questions you may have.

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