

CCM 2014 Testimony

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PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT 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.

HB 5455 "An Act Concerning the Issuance of Municipal Soft-Serve Ice Cream Vendor Permits"

CCM opposes HB 5455 as it would be an unfunded mandate on towns and cities.

The bill would require each municipality to issue a soft-serve ice cream permit no later than 7 days after the application has been submitted. In addition, denial of such permit shall not be based on whether the results of a background check have been received. This proposal will not only place discretionary constraints on officials from issuing these permits, but may also expose children to individuals with a criminal past if a permit can be granted without a background check being completed.

CCM has concerns with the proposal in several regards. First, the premise of the bill based on the belief that all municipalities require a soft serve ice cream permit. This will mandate some towns and cities that currently do not require such a permit, to develop standards and protocols for issuance of them. In addition, several towns utilize a health district to administer these permits. Current language would require a municipality to issue such permits when they rely on other resources to complete those duties. With municipal resources being strained in these economic times, some towns and cities may not be able to fully comply.

Second, most important, indicating that a denial of the permit shall not be based on whether the results of a background check have been received raises a great public safety concern. This would remove local control of the issuance of these permits and can potentially expose our child to unwanted predators that may use these vehicles to prey upon children. These permit applications should not be automatic acceptance, there should be some local discretion.

In the difficult fiscal climate, towns and cities are required to do more with less. In that regard, imposing deadline on certain applications will put a strain on municipal employees an *unfunded mandate* on towns and cities. More importantly, HB 5455 may negatively impact public safety.



If you have any questions, please contact Randy Collins, Senior Legislative Associate for CCM, at rcollins@ccm-ct.org or (860) 707-6446.