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March 14, 2014

Planning & Development Committee
Room 2100, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Re: **Raised Bill No. 5507 – An Act Concerning the Appointment of Zoning Enforcement Officials, Building Officials and Fire Marshals**

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Commerce Committee:

Municipal planners representing the towns and cities of the South Western Region of Connecticut write in opposition to *Raised Bill No. 5507*.

Changing the appointment authority from the Zoning Commission, which creates the regulations, to the Chief Executive Officer of the town seems to be a change that would create added confusion and uncertainty whenever a new CEO is elected.

Technically the ZEO could change with each CEO election which could be every 2-4 years with no guarantee of the professionalism of the individual appointed by the CEO. New ZEO appointees could be political appointments without the necessary background and training to properly perform the functions of ZEO and enforcement or any knowledge of zoning law. Likewise enforcement could be politically motivated and not related to violations of zoning regulations.

In addition, the issue of precedents, determinations and findings from one ZEO to another could be inconsistent thereby creating confusion for the public.

We strongly appeal to the Connecticut General Assembly to oppose Raised Bill 5507 in order to protect municipalities' ability to conduct their zoning enforcement process.

Very truly yours,

The South Western Region Municipal Planning & Zoning Directors:
Jeremy Ginsberg (Darien); Diane Fox (Greenwich), Steve Kleppin (New Canaan), Michael Greene (Norwalk), Norman Cole (Stamford), Tracy Kulikowski (Weston), Larry Bradley (Westport), Bob Nerney (Wilton)

Copies: South Western Regional Planning Agency
South Western Region Metropolitan Planning Organization