



## State of Connecticut

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#### Testimony

### **HB 5584: An Act Concerning Regionalism and Making Technical Changes to Statutes Concerning Municipal Tax Collection Planning and Development Committee**

**March 21, 2014**

Good morning, Senator Osten, Representative Rojas, Senator Fasano, and Representative Aman, and distinguished members of the Planning and Development Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to present testimony on HB 5584.

I would like to call the Committee's attention to a significant discrepancy between the bill's language and an agreement established between the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) and two planning regions in southwestern Connecticut.

Earlier this year, OPM approved the proposed merger of the South Western and the Housatonic Valley regions. Following the merger, the new region would form the basis for a new Council of Governments that would (if approved by the relevant municipalities) include 18 municipalities: Bethel, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Danbury, Darien, Greenwich, New Canaan, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, Norwalk, Redding, Ridgefield, Sherman, Stamford, Weston, Westport, and Wilton.

In the language of HB 5584, however, six of these municipalities are not included in the merged region, which is referred to in Section 1 (a) of the bill as the Southwestern Connecticut Region. Of these municipalities, the bill includes New Milford, Newtown, Redding, Ridgefield, and Sherman in the South Central Region, and it does not mention Stamford at all.

I was informed this morning by officials in both regions that OPM is aware of this discrepancy between the bill and its agreement with the South Western and Housatonic Valley regions and that corrections are likely forthcoming that will restore the provisions of the agreement to the bill's language. Nevertheless, I thought it was wise to call it to the Committee's attention so that it is on the record, and I would ask for your careful oversight to ensure that the conditions promised to the officials of those two regions are retained in the bill.

Thank you very much for your attention to this matter.