



State of Connecticut

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Dear Senator Osten, Representative Rojas, Senator Fasano, Representative Aman and the members of the Planning and Development Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 39 AN ACT AUTHORIZING MUNICIPALITIES TO COLLECT THE MARIJUANA AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES TAX.

The state of Connecticut has had the Marijuana and Controlled Substances tax on our books since 1991, but we have not been capitalizing on its revenue potential. In the Fiscal Year 2013-12 Connecticut collected only about \$35,000 through this tax and this figure is consistent with previous years. The Department of Revenue Services annual reports state that this tax is intended to be an economic burden on drug dealers. If we are serious about penalizing drug dealers and discouraging their harmful actions, we need to do better than this.

I have proposed this legislation before, and I believe it will encourage our towns and cities to step up their work to keep illegal drugs out of our neighborhoods. Current law allows the Department of Revenue Services to collect the revenue of the Marijuana and Controlled Substances Tax that results from drug arrests. However, local officials already burdened by paperwork and unfunded mandates do not reap any financial benefit for referring their local drug arrests to DRS for tax collection purposes.

Since the current system does not encourage collection of this tax, I propose that we allow our municipalities to collect 100 percent of the tax revenues. This bill would not only spur our towns to clamp down on drug dealing but would allow them to see some extra revenue at a time where budgets are as tight as ever. Everyone but drug dealers would benefit from this proposal.

Thank you again for allowing me to testify on this bill and for considering this legislation.

Rob Kane
Deputy Minority Leader Pro Tempore