

# TOWN OF DURHAM

OFFICE OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN  
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Testimony  
Laura Francis  
First Selectman  
Town of Durham  
Before the Public Safety Committee  
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Durham relies on the Resident State Trooper program to provide public safety coverage in our community. We value the relationship we have developed with our trooper, who has enhanced public safety for our residents and businesses.

I strongly support HB-5391, AN ACT CONCERNING OVERTIME AND FRINGE BENEFITS OF RESIDENT STATE TROOPERS, which will address concerns with increasing fringe benefit rates.

Durham received a notice in late August that the fringe benefit rate has increased to 83.25% effective July 1. Although we expected some increase in the rate, this represents a big jump in costs.

Towns need to be able to manage costs to prepare and implement budgets and minimize disruption in programs. When we are informed of sizable increases in costs after our local budget has been adopted, it puts us in a difficult position with regard to providing services to our residents.

The Resident State Trooper program is a valuable partnership with the State Police that helps us create and maintain safer communities. As the state considers ways of encouraging towns to form regional partnerships to deliver services more efficiently, we must remember that the Resident State Trooper program is a regional partnership that allows the state and the towns to share responsibility for providing critical public safety services.

Unless the costs of the program are controlled, this regional partnership may be compromised, undermining public safety in our communities. Moreover, the state may wind up shouldering 100% of the cost of providing such services if towns are forced to reduce or abandon their Resident State Trooper program.

Therefore, I urge you to support HB-5391 to assist municipalities in sustaining a strong public safety presence in our communities.