
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5584

AN ACT CONCERNING REGIONALISM AND MAKING TECHNICAL CHANGES TO STATUTES CONCERNING MUNICIPAL TAX COLLECTION.

SUMMARY:

This bill:

1. appropriates \$2,620,448 from the General Fund to the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) for a grant to the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) and the Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology (CCAT) to create Nutmeg Network-related services and demonstration projects;
2. entitles regional councils of government (COG) to additional payments from the regional planning incentive account if they accepted members from a different regional planning organization (RPO) before January 1, 2014;
3. requires the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) Secretary to conduct a planning region analysis and redesignation by January 1, 2015 (see COMMENT);
4. makes changes to the statute concerning COGs' regional planning commissions (RPC);
5. eliminates the requirement that the governor's appointee to the Connecticut Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations be nominated by the Regional Planning Association of Connecticut; and
6. makes technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, unless noted otherwise below

§ 9 — NUTMEG NETWORK SERVICES AND DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

The bill appropriates \$2,620,448 in FY 15 to DECD for a grant to CRCOG in partnership with CCAT for projects related to the state-wide high speed network (Nutmeg Network). Of this grant, CRCOG and CCAT must use:

1. \$559,250 to develop a regional data and disaster recovery (RDDR) center to (a) protect and store municipal data at an off-site location, (b) provide dedicated information technology staff and software to facilitate application sharing, and (c) serve as a regional shared services entry point and
2. \$405,750 to develop an online portal for municipal human resources services, including wage and classification information and templates.

The bill also requires CRCOG and CCAT to develop five pilot programs. Municipalities are eligible to participate in these pilot programs if they are (1) members of any COG, (2) connected to the Nutmeg Network, (3) willing to participate, and (4) capable of participating successfully. The pilot programs are funded as follows:

1. \$101,000 for (a) developing a program allowing up to six municipalities to store equipment in the RDDR center to facilitate live Internet streaming of municipal meetings and (b) CCAT to research less expensive and more mobile equipment alternatives for broadcasting municipal meetings over the Internet;
2. \$603,500 for developing an electronic document management system program for up to six municipalities to (a) facilitate conversion to electronic document storage, (b) streamline file searches and storage, and (c) facilitate long-term systems and software services sharing between municipalities;
3. \$95,200 for developing a voice-over Internet protocol program to provide advanced communications services, including

website and video conferencing, to up to six municipalities;

4. \$105,748 for developing a hosting services program for up to seven municipalities providing customized, host software solutions and a virtual data storage environment; and
5. \$750,000 for creating software for up to three municipalities that coordinates board of education and municipal payrolls with their uniform charts of accounts.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2014

§ 10 — COG FUNDING

The bill makes changes to the funding formula PA 13-247 established for RPOs. Under the bill, a COG that added one or more, but not all, of the member municipalities of another RPO before January 1, 2014 is entitled to an additional payment, as shown in Table 1. Under the funding formula PA 13-247 established, COGs are only eligible for an additional payment if two or more RPOs, and all of their members, consolidated into one COG.

Table 1: Funding Formula for RPOs

| | <i>FY 14</i> | <i>FY 15 and Beyond</i> | <i>New or Existing Provision</i> |
|--|--|--|----------------------------------|
| Base Amount each RPO receives | \$125,000 | \$125,000 | Existing |
| Additional Amount Per Person | \$0 | 50¢, based on most recent census | Existing |
| Additional payment for consolidated COGs | Amount that RPOs would have received if they had not voluntarily consolidated before January 1, 2014 | \$125,000 for each RPO that voluntarily consolidated before January 1, 2014 | Existing |
| Additional payment for COGs that add some, but not all, of another RPO's members | Pro rata share for each added member, based on most recent census, of the amount the member's former RPO would have received on behalf of such municipality if it had not voluntarily consolidated | Pro rata share for each added member, based on most recent census, of the amount the member's former RPO would have received on behalf of such municipality if it had not voluntarily consolidated | New |

§ 3 — PLANNING REGION ANALYSIS AND REDESIGNATION

By law, at least every 20 years, the OPM secretary must analyze planning region boundaries and redesignate them if necessary. The bill resets the date by which the secretary's planning region analysis must be completed from January 1, 2014 to January 1, 2015 (see COMMENT). (As required under current law, the secretary completed such an analysis and designation before the January 1, 2014 deadline.)

By law, revised local planning regions will go into effect on January 1, 2015 (CGS § 16a-4c).

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2015

§§ 7 & 8 — REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS

By law, a COG may carry out its planning duties and responsibilities through an RPC, which it may establish through its bylaws. The bill makes several changes to the role of RPCs, including (1) specifying that they act in advisory capacity and (2) requiring any RPC recommendation to be endorsed by the COG before becoming effective, except for recommendations on proposed subdivisions and zone or zone use changes.

By law, each COG member municipality is entitled to one seat on an RPC. Under current law, RPC members are appointed by member municipalities' planning commissions and must (1) be electors of those municipalities and (2) serve on the municipalities' planning commissions. The bill instead allows a COG's bylaws to establish the appointment process, as long as at least 50% of RPC members serve concurrently on a planning, zoning, or planning and zoning commission.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2014, except for a related conforming change, which is effective January 1, 2015.

**§ 1 — GOVERNOR’S APPOINTEE TO THE CONNECTICUT
ADVISORY COMMISSION ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL
RELATIONS**

Under current law, the governor appoints an individual representing a COG or regional planning agency (RPA) to the Connecticut Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations from a list of nominees prepared by the Regional Planning Association of Connecticut. The bill eliminates the requirement that the appointee come from the association’s list. (The association is now called the Connecticut Association of Regional Planning Organizations.)

§§ 2-6 — TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING CHANGES

The bill makes conforming changes related to the (1) OPM secretary’s planning region analysis and (2) elimination of RPAs and regional councils of elected officials (CEO) after January 1, 2015 (§§ 2, 3, & 4).

The bill also makes several technical changes (§§ 5 & 6).

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2015, except for the technical changes, which are effective on passage.

BACKGROUND

RPOs

Within planning regions, the three types of regional planning organizations currently allowed by law are RPAs, CEOs, and COGs. PA 13-247 requires CEOs and RPAs to reestablish themselves as COGs by January 1, 2015.

COMMENT

***Planning Region Analysis Deadline is the Date the Requirement
Becomes Effective***

The bill requires the OPM secretary, by January 1, 2015, to analyze planning region boundaries and redesignate them if necessary. This provision becomes effective January 1, 2015, giving the secretary only one day to complete the analysis and redesignation. By law, revised local planning regions will go into effect on January 1, 2015.

Current law requires the analysis and redesignation to occur by January 1, 2014 (this deadline was met).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Planning and Development Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 15 Nay 5 (03/25/2014)