



CCM 2014 Testimony

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EDUCATION COMMITTEE

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The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent over 92% of Connecticut's population. We appreciate the opportunity to testify on bills of interest to towns and cities.

HB 5567, "An Act Concerning the Alternative Schools"

CCM *has concerns with the costs associated with implementing* this bill which would require all local or regional boards of education to offer an alternative school program for certain students.

While CCM appreciates the intent of this proposal, the bill would create yet another new unfunded mandate on local boards of education by requiring them to provide an "alternative school program" for certain students.

The ECS grant is currently underfunded by over \$700 million and, as CCM has testified to before, the cost for public education in our state for the current school year is over \$10 billion.

Municipal property taxpayers already:

- Fund 51.4 percent of that amount (more than \$5 billion). The State contributes an estimated 42.9 percent and the federal government 5.2 percent.
- Pay at least \$0.62 of every \$1.00 raised in property taxes toward PreK-12 public education.
- Pay at least 60 percent of Connecticut's \$1.8 billion in special-education costs.
- Pick-up the bill for numerous other state-mandated education priorities that are not fully funded by the State.

The Education Mandates Relief Task Force was created last year by the legislature to review the various mandates that are placed on the education system. We urge the legislature to continue examining mandate relief, not imposing unfunded mandates.

If the policy position contained within this bill is a priority of the state, then it should ensure full funding to implement it. Otherwise, CCM urges the committee to **take no action** on this bill.



If you have any questions, please contact Chelsey Worth at cworth@ccm-ct.org or (203) 470-5214.