

February 23, 2015

Senator Bye, Chair of the Appropriations Committee
Representative Walker, Co-Chair

Re: Bill 6824

As the Appropriations Committee considers Bill 6824, please be aware its impact on the Resident Trooper Program. The Governor's proposed change to cost-sharing percentages for the Resident Trooper Program will have a devastating effect on small towns such as East Granby. Based on State Police projections and the Governor's proposal, East Granby's FY16 labor and overhead costs will increase by \$99,000 over the current year. This change alone will increase the General Government budget by over 2%. If this proposal is not reversed, East Granby will probably be forced to reduce from two troopers to one trooper and add a police officer. Even with that change our total costs would still increase by \$45,000 over the current year or an increase of 1% on the overall Town budget.

The Resident Trooper program is an excellent program however cost-sharing at 100% is going to force Towns to down-size their number of troopers. This ultimately will effect the State Budget as those "down-sized" troopers revert back to the State Police expense lines. For example, if ten towns reduce one junior trooper each, with no town offset, the effect is \$1.5 million dollars of expenses that would go back to the FY16 State Police budget. Certainly towns need to pay a portion of costs but a 100% share means the towns are paying the entire cost for a trooper who has statewide jurisdiction (including highway calls while on duty in town) and it hardly seems equitable.

As an example of what comprises costs for the program, I'll use a senior trooper. Under a 100% cost share in FY16, East Granby will pay salary (\$93,530), longevity (\$436), fringe benefits (\$82,746), travel miles (\$2,176), trooper stipend (\$1,200), motor vehicle depreciation (\$5,712), supplies (\$376) and clothing (\$268) for a cost of \$186,444 Overhead costs are 116% of labor costs.

By requiring small towns to pick up 100% of the Resident Trooper program costs, the proposed budget will undermine public safety in smaller communities and/or force increases in property taxes. It is unfortunate that as towns are forming regional partnerships to achieve savings, this action will undermine a successful regional program that allows the state and the towns to share responsibility for providing critical public safety services.

Regards,

James M. Hayden
First Selectman