



# WESTPORT, CONNECTICUT

JAMES S. MARPE  
*First Selectman*

HON. JAMES S. MARPE  
FIRST SELECTMAN, TOWN OF WESTPORT  
PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY  
FEBRUARY 13, 2015

RE: S.B. 845 AN ACT CONCERNING THE FISCAL IMPACT OF PROPOSED AGENCY REGULATIONS

Thank you for the opportunity to address proposed Senate Bill 845 and the effect its passage will have on the Town of Westport. Municipalities such as Westport would greatly benefit from the additional information regarding financial ramifications of potential budget impacts from future regulatory changes.

I refer to the Town of Westport's Public Works Director, Steve Edwards', December 16, 2014 testimony on a separate matter. Although it relates to a specific regulatory modification proposal, Mr. Edwards' statement is appropriate and relevant to the discussion before you today. He stated:

The Town of Westport is proud of its environmental stewardship and has been active for decades in an ongoing effort to reduce our environmental footprint... Westport is one of the 25% compliant municipalities that would be hard pressed to maintain compliance... [and] we estimate that we would need to add \$1 million dollars to our annual operating budget in order to be compliant...

This \$1 million estimate is for one such proposed agency regulation. In reality, other agency regulations with fiscal impacts could potentially create significant budgetary consequences, adding millions of dollars to already strained municipal budgets.

The Town of Westport supports the legislation that will require an expanded fiscal analysis of proposed agency regulations and the regulation review committee to hold a hearing on any regulation with a fiscal note that indicates a potential cost to businesses or municipalities. This will provide relief and additional vital information for communities that are currently doing everything in their power to comply with current regulations.

The goals of these agency regulations are valid and admirable. If fully enforced, however, they may have the unfortunate effect of becoming onerous and unrealistic for many municipalities, especially from a budgetary standpoint. The dichotomy is that in some cases, it costs more to comply with regulations than to pay the fine associated with non-compliance. Obviously, that is not the intention.

In my opinion, requiring the regulation review committee to hold hearings will provide an opportunity for municipalities to demonstrate their good faith efforts to comply with current regulations. Also, knowledge and foresight of the budgetary implications of proposed regulations will provide much needed information as municipalities prepare yearly budgets. Given the opportunity to recognize the funding involved in achieving all the requirements would prove most beneficial to you, our legislators, and to the personnel in municipalities who must organize, fund, and sustain compliance with regulations.

I encourage you to consider voting favorably for this proposed legislation.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "James S. Marpe".

James S. Marpe  
First Selectman

cc: Senator Tony Hwang, 28<sup>th</sup> State Senate District