THE TOWN OF FARMINGTON
INCORPORATED 1645

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Testimony
Kathleen A. Eagen
Town Manager
Town of Farmington
Before the Planning & Development Committee
February 4, 2015

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of **HB-5096, AN ACT INCREASING THE THRESHOLD REQUIRED FOR PASSAGE OF UNFUNDED MANDATES.**

As the Town of Farmington, like all Connecticut towns, prepares its budget for the coming year, elected and appointed officials are faced with making a significant effort to reduce costs, despite the continuing need to provide residents with high quality public services.

This effort to cut costs becomes increasingly necessary as underfunded or unfunded state mandates become more frequent and require thousands of dollars of municipal funding each year. In order to conform to these mandates, towns and cities face a difficult decision: cut valuable public services or increase property taxes.

Therefore, the Town of Farmington supports the efforts being made by Connecticut legislators to adopt **HB-5096,** which will flag bills containing underfunded or unfunded mandates that would place undue fiscal burden on the state's municipalities.

Additionally, **HB-5096**, as it is currently written, contains a requirement that any new unfunded mandates shall be approved by a 2/3 vote of the General Assembly. This stipulation would be an important oversight mechanism to ensure that the costs and benefits of new proposals are carefully considered.

The components of **HB-5096** will ensure that lawmakers consider whether the adoption of new underfunded or unfunded legislation would impose undue burden on Connecticut's cities and towns in a time when residents require municipalities to observe fiscal conservancy while providing premium public services.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important bill.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathleen A. Eagen

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