

TESTIMONY
Thomas Dunn
Mayor, Town of Wolcott
Before the
Planning & Development Committee
February 13, 2015

RE: SB-188 AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL MANDATE RELIEF

I am here to **support the provisions in SB-188** which would eliminate the storage expenses paid for by municipalities when tenants are evicted.

Although the law was amended a few years ago to relieve towns of the burden of transporting the Evictee's belongings to the storage facility, the towns continue to bear the costs of storing the belongings.

The town is responsible to pay for the use of the storage unit for a minimum of 15 days. In the event the evictee does not come back to claim their possessions, the town must either advertise for an auction, incurring publication charges, as well as the time to hold the auction, or go back to the unit, load the contents back on to trucks and trailers and haul the items to be discarded. For the most part, the items in the units are not in a condition to be sold at a tag sale or auctioned. Remember - it is the Public Works Crew who is required to do this on the taxpayer's dime.

What is most perplexing is that we do not get reimbursed from the state for the full cost of the eviction. The cost of the rental is approximately \$225.00 for the month (15 days or 30, same price) and the labor of the Town Employees to be there when there is a more pressing need for them to be doing their jobs maintaining the Town of Wolcott.

It should not be the responsibility of the taxpayers to pay for any of this. An eviction is a civil matter and should be handled as such. It is not to say that Municipalities have no empathy for someone who is down on their luck, but an eviction process should be kept between the Property Owner, the Renter and the Court System that approves the Eviction. **Please support SB-188.**

In addition, I also support efforts to reduce the burden on towns associated with posting legal notices in newspapers, requiring the operating expenses for the probate courts to be paid out of state fees and eliminating the municipal health insurance premium tax.