



Testimony  
Dick Smith  
First Selectman, Deep River  
Public Safety & Security Committee  
of the Connecticut General Assembly  
February 5, 2015

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in *support* of **Proposed SB- 261, AN ACT CONCERNING THE OVERTIME COSTS OF RESIDENT STATE POLICE OFFICERS**, which would assist towns in maintaining Resident State Trooper programs.

Costs for the Resident State Program increase significantly each year. A few years ago, the fringe benefit rate for was about 59% and we questioned why it was so high. Now, the rate has increased to 83.85%, and many towns are struggling to find some savings in their budget to offset this shortfall.

Connecticut's small towns value the Resident State Trooper program but we are frustrated by continued increases in the cost of these services. The Resident State Trooper program has been a good fit for smaller communities and provides towns with an efficient way of maintaining a strong public safety presence in towns without overburdening property taxpayers.

The program also reduces the burden on the state by ensuring that towns share responsibility for these services. If towns are forced to abandon the Resident State Trooper program, the state is responsible for 100% of the costs associated with providing public safety coverage in these areas.

I urge your support for SB-261, which will strengthen public safety in our communities.