



# CCM 2015 Testimony

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## ***COMMERCE COMMITTEE***

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The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent over 96% of Connecticut's population. We appreciate the opportunity to testify on bills of interest to towns and cities.

**HB 5986, "An Act Extending Enterprise Zone Benefits and Tax Exemptions to Businesses in Connecticut's Cities"**

CCM opposes HB 5986, which would extend enterprise zone benefits to businesses located in or planning to locate in a municipality with a population greater than one hundred thousand that hire unemployed residents of those cities and offer ten years of property and corporate tax exemptions to such businesses.

This is an unfunded mandate on cities, and the exemption of businesses from 10 years of local property taxes would simply shift the burden of local taxes to existing residential and business tax payers. This exemption would be in addition to the already 77 state-mandated property tax exemptions currently on the books (see attached).

CCM urges the Committee to oppose this bill.



If you have any questions, please contact Randy Collins, Senior Legislative Associate, at [rcollins@ccm-ct.org](mailto:rcollins@ccm-ct.org) or (203) 498-3000.

# STATE MANDATED PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS

Every year there are many well-intentioned proposals to reduce the property tax burden of one group or another. Everybody wants out of the property tax – but peeling off one group after another is not reform. Again, these would only serve to shift the burden of those taxes to the remaining property owners of a given municipality.

Currently, there are close to two-dozen opportunities for property tax abatement at municipal option and **77 mandated ones** (see below).

In an economy where local officials are struggling to sustain critical services – amidst growing deficits, evaporating revenues, and layoffs – this bill would negatively impact hometown budgets. Towns and cities have already suffered significant cuts in state aid over the last several years and the State is currently grappling with a huge deficits. This is not the time for enacting any new unfunded mandates, no matter what the reason.

## **The following property is exempt from taxation per Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S. §12-81):**

1. Property of the United States
2. State property, reservation land held in trust by the state for an Indian tribe.
3. County Property (repealed).
4. Municipal Property.
5. Property held by trustees for public purposes.
6. Property of volunteer fire companies and property devoted to public use.
7. Property used for scientific, educational, literary, historical or charitable purposes.
8. College property.
9. Personal property loaned to tax-exempt educational institutions
10. Property belonging to agricultural or horticultural societies.
11. Property held for cemetery use.
12. Personal property of religious organizations devoted to religious or charitable use.
13. Houses of religious worship.
14. Property of religious organizations used for certain purposes.
15. Houses used by officiating clergymen as dwellings.
16. Hospitals and sanatoriums.
17. Blind persons.
18. Property of veterans' organizations.
  - a. Property of bona fide war veterans' organization.
  - b. Property of the Grand Army the Republic.
19. Veteran's exemptions.
20. Servicemen and veterans having disability ratings.
21. Disabled veterans with severe disability.
  - a. Disabilities.
  - b. Exemptions hereunder additional to others. Surviving spouse's rights.
  - c. Municipal option to allow total exemption for residence with respect to which veteran has received assistance for special housing under Title 38 of the United States Code.
22. Surviving spouse or minor child of serviceman or veteran.
23. Serviceman's surviving spouse receiving federal benefits.
24. Surviving spouse and minor child of veteran receiving compensation from Veteran's Administration.
25. Surviving parent of deceased serviceman or veteran.
26. Parents of veterans.
27. Property of Grand Army Posts.
28. Property of United States Army instructors.
29. Property of the American National Red Cross.
30. Fuel and provisions.
31. Household furniture.
32. Private libraries.
33. Musical instruments.
34. Watches and jewelry.
35. Wearing apparel.

36. Commercial fishing apparatus.
  37. Mechanic's tools.
  38. Farming tools.
  39. Farm produce.
  40. Sheep, goats, and swine.
  41. Dairy and beef cattle and oxen.
  42. Poultry.
  43. Cash.
  44. Nursery products.
  45. Property of units of Connecticut National Guard.
  46. Watercraft owned by non-residents (repealed).
  47. Carriages, wagons, and bicycles.
  48. Airport improvements.
  49. Nonprofit camps or recreational facilities for charitable purposes.
  50. Exemption of manufacturers' inventories.
  51. Water pollution control structures and equipment exempt.
  52. Structures and equipment for air pollution control.
  53. Motor vehicle of servicemen.
  54. Wholesale and retail business inventory.
  55. Property of totally disabled persons.
  56. Solar energy systems.
  57. Class I renewable energy sources and hydropower facilities.
  58. Property leased to a charitable, religious, or nonprofit organization.
  59. Manufacturing facility in a distressed municipality, targeted investment community, or enterprise zone.
  60. Machinery and equipment in a manufacturing facility in a distressed municipality, targeted investment community, or enterprise zone.
  61. Vessels used primarily for commercial fishing.
  62. Passive solar energy systems.
  63. Solar energy electricity generating and cogeneration systems.
  64. Vessels.
  65. Vanpool vehicles.
  66. Motor vehicles leased to state agencies.
  67. Beach property belonging to or held in trust for cities.
  68. Any livestock used in farming or any horse or pony assessed at less than \$1000.
  69. Property of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.
  70. Manufacturing and equipment acquired as part of a technological upgrading of a manufacturing process in a distressed municipality or targeted investment community.
  71. Any motor vehicle owned by a member of an indigenous Indian tribe or their spouse, and garaged on the reservation of the tribe (PA 89-368)
  72. New machinery and equipment, applicable only in the five full assessment years following acquisition.
  73. Temporary devices or structures for seasonal production, storage, or protection of plants or plant material.
  74. Certain vehicles used to transport freight for hire.
  75. Certain health care institutions.
  76. New machinery and equipment for biotechnology, after assessment year 2011.
- Real Property of any Regional Council or Agency