



**Testimony
Betsy Gara
Connecticut Council of Small Towns
Before the
Housing Committee
February 17, 2015**

OPPOSE – SB-745 AN ACT CONCERNING PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENTS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS.

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) *opposes* SB-745 which would require municipalities to provide property tax abatements for affordable housing units regardless of whether such units are new or owner occupied.

Although we support efforts to encourage the development of affordable housing that is consistent with responsible growth principles, abating property tax payments for affordable housing units will reduce much-needed revenues and/or require towns to shift more of the burden onto homeowners and businesses. Given the ongoing fiscal challenges facing municipalities, lawmakers must refrain from mandating property tax exemptions that undermine the ability of towns to provide critical programs and services to residents without shifting more of the burden onto the backs of property taxpayers.

COST therefore urges you to oppose this bill.