



# TOWN OF EAST GRANBY

INCORPORATED 1858

EAST GRANBY, CONNECTICUT 06026

OFFICE OF FIRST SELECTMAN

PHONE (860) 653-2576

FAX (860) 653-4017

February 4, 2015

Senator Timothy Larson, Co-Chair of the Public Safety & Security Committee  
 Representative Stephen Dargan, Co-Chair  
 Senator Anthony Guglielmo, Ranking Member  
 Representative Lezlye Zupkus, Ranking Member

### Testimony on SB-261 – An Act Concerning the Overtime Costs of Resident State Police Officers

Dear Senator Larson, Representative Dargan and Members of the Public Safety & Security Committee;

East Granby is a Resident Trooper Town and as such I am asking for your support for SB261. Reducing net Resident Trooper overtime fringe costs from the current 100% charge to 30% is significant for small towns such as ours. On our most recent State Police overtime bill, 45% of the bill or over \$51 per hour was for "Fringe Benefits Recovery". Put another way, the Fringe Benefit Recovery charge was almost the same as the actual labor cost of the Trooper overtime which was an average of \$60 per hour.

I am a firm believer in the Resident Trooper Program but escalating costs will soon make us consider reducing our current complement of two troopers to one trooper and fill the spot with a town officer. There are tangible benefits to keeping two troopers but it's getting more and more difficult to maintain unless Resident Trooper Program total costs are kept under control.

Please note:

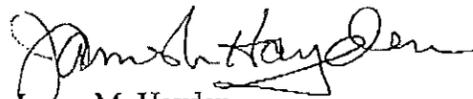
- With increasing costs, our budget may not be able to support 100% replacement coverage of shift vacancies. If this was the case, East Granby would have to rely on the State Patrol Trooper who covers a vast amount of highway north of Hartford all the way to the Massachusetts line. The geography that the Patrol Trooper covers includes several state facilities and six prisons.
- Program and coverage decisions driven by increasing costs will add to emergency response times here in East Granby. Response times can also be impacted if our resident trooper has to leave town to cover an emergency in another resident trooper town or on the highway and then return for a service call in East Granby.

- Reducing overtime costs will allow us to maintain staffing levels so that our officers are minutes away from schools, senior citizen housing and businesses in case of emergencies.
- In the past 30 days we have had several "weather events" and additional coverage is added during snow storms to keep travelers and our residents safe. Less expensive overtime costs will help us get through the difficult times and not sacrifice public safety.

East Granby is a proud recipient of the high quality service provided by the Resident Trooper Program which includes the supervision of our local police officers. I consider the Resident Trooper Program to be a valued and important program. As a "customer" of the State Police we want to remain partners in creating safe communities but overtime fringe benefit costs are impacting our ability to maintain and enhance our public safety efforts.

From a practical perspective, resident trooper towns offset millions of dollars of cost for the State of Connecticut. It would be unfortunate if rising costs forced the towns to reduce their number of resident troopers and then placed the full expense burden of those troopers back onto the state government and the state budget. Thank you for your support of this important bill.

Sincerely,



James M. Hayden  
First Selectman