

**Derrylyn Gorski
First Selectman
Town of Bethany
Public Hearing Testimony
Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee
Friday, February 26, 2016, 10:30 A.M.**

Re: HB-5047 - AN ACT CONCERNING EXEMPTIONS UNDER THE PROPERTY TAX

I appreciate this opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to exempting from the property tax personal property owned or leased by a business organization whose personal property has a total assessed value of less than \$10,000.

Bethany, a town of 5,500 people, is the only rural town in New Haven County. Our lakes and reservoirs supply water for the City of New Haven. However, because we have no municipal water or sewers our opportunities for economic development are limited placing the tax burden on our residents.

When one is accustomed to dealing in millions of dollars, tens of thousands may seem insignificant. In small towns like Bethany, every penny counts.

With Bethany's current mill rate, a business with personal property assessed at \$9,999 would pay \$350.00 in property tax, not an onerous amount. Bethany has 287 personal property accounts of which 217 are under \$10,000 in assessed value and 137 are under \$3,700, so that 63% of eligible Bethany businesses would save less than \$130.00 per year. However, the Town of Bethany stands to lose over \$17,000 in revenue. That \$17,000 will pay for a year's salary for our part-time Senior Bus driver, or the annual electric bill for Town Hall or the entire youth services program for the year.

According to Bethany's Assessor, HB-5047 would not save him any time because he still has to send out forms to determine if the business is eligible. To Bethany's Assessor Mario Panagrosso, and to me, this looks to be a solution in search of a problem.

Please vote NO on HB-5047