



To: Finance, Revenue & Bonding Committee

From: Betsy Gara
Connecticut Council of Small Towns

Date: March 9, 2016

Re: **SUPPORT - HB-5492 - AN ACT INCREASING CERTAIN MUNICIPAL FILING FEES.**

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) supports **HB-5492**, which increases various municipal filing fees.

Connecticut's towns and cities are more reliant on property tax revenues to fund critical programs than any other state in the nation, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Given the fiscal challenges facing the state, municipal aid for Connecticut's small towns has been largely flat-funded for several years now although the cost of providing education, public safety and transportation services has increased significantly. As a result, local property taxpayers are shouldering more of the burden for these increased costs.

Under existing law, the fees for various municipal services are fixed in statute. Although we support efforts to ensure that municipalities are authorized to increase fees to more accurately reflect the cost of indexing, recording, scanning, and preserving records, HB-5492 is good step in the right direction.

COST urges your support for HB-5492.

COST is a statewide advocacy organization committed to giving small towns a strong voice in the legislative process. Its members are Connecticut towns with populations of less than 30,000. COST champions the major policy needs and concerns of Connecticut's suburban and rural towns.