



**Testimony on behalf of
The Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association, Inc.
Before the Finance Committee
March 18, 2016**

**Raised Bill 5627 – An Act Eliminating the Sales Tax on Parking Fees at Certain,
Federal, State, & Local Parking Lots**

The Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association, Inc. (CRPA) is a nonprofit charitable organization whose mission is to provide a network of support to our members through professional development and resources in order to enhance the quality of recreation and parks services in Connecticut. CRPA represents over 650 individual professionals from municipal, nonprofit and private, park, recreation & camp organizations, as well as over 130 of the 169 municipal park and recreation departments in Connecticut.

For more than 65 years, ensuring that Connecticut residents have easy and affordable access to parks and the greatest opportunity to safely participate in physical activity as a means to combat the obesity epidemic has been central to CRPA's mission.

Therefore, CRPA supports Raised Bill 5627

The requirement of collecting a tax on seasonal parking lot fees was passed during the June 30, 2015 special session and was extremely difficult for many of our member departments to implement on such short notice and during their busiest season.

Departments are hard pressed to find funding to comply with this new mandate. There is a cost associated with collecting and tracking the tax and then paying the Department of Revenue Services. Municipal recreation departments are already stretched thin and face an uphill battle when trying to find funding to maintain programs, parks, fields, and facilities. With the state reduction in municipal funding looming it is more paramount than ever that municipal departments are not saddled with additional unfunded mandates.

It will take additional personnel to comply. Where will this funding come from? We cannot afford to have it taken from existing programs that service residents or from money allocated to repair parks and facilities.

For the above mentioned reasons we strongly support the passage of Raised Bill 5627.

Paul Roche
Chair, CRPA Legislative Committee