Testimony
Betsy Gara, Executive Director
Connecticut Council of Small Towns
Before the
Insurance & Real Estate Committee
March 9, 2016

SUPPORT - HB-5518 - AN ACT IMPOSING A SURCHARGE ON CERTAIN PERSONAL RISK INSURANCE POLICIES TO FUND REGIONAL FIRE SCHOOLS' OPERATING BUDGETS AND CERTAIN FIREFIGHTER TRAINING COSTS AND PURCHASES OF FIRE EQUIPMENT.

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) **supports HB-5518** which creates a mechanism for funding the fire training schools. The fire training schools allow municipalities to share in the cost of training fire services personnel. State aid for the fire training schools has been cut in recent years and is facing additional cuts this year. This is unfortunate because the fire training schools are a successful model of regional collaboration that help enhance public safety in our communities by ensuring that firefighters receive appropriate training.

HB-5518 will help fund the operating budgets of the fire training schools to ensure that these programs are able to continue to serve the needs of our communities. It will also help fund the purchase of fire equipment and training to further enhance public safety.

COST urges support for HB-5518.

COST is an 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.

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