



Testimony

**Betsy Gara, Executive Director
Connecticut Council of Small Towns
Before the Insurance Committee
March 8, 2016**

SUPPORT – HB-5519 - AN ACT AUTHORIZING CATASTROPHE SAVINGS ACCOUNTS FOR HOMEOWNERS INSURANCE POLICYHOLDERS AND ESTABLISHING INCOME TAX DEDUCTIONS FOR HOMEOWNERS SUFFERING CERTAIN UNINSURED PROPERTY LOSSES.

Thousands of homes in Connecticut have been devastated by crumbling foundations that will require hundreds of thousands of dollars to repair. Due to the huge costs associated with repairing the foundations, many residents will have no choice but to walk away.

In addition to the impact on these families, the communities will be left with hundreds of homes that cannot be sold, creating safety concerns for our residents. In addition, this will impact the grand lists in these communities, shifting more of the property tax burden to a smaller number of homeowners and businesses.

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST), which represents 115 towns throughout Connecticut, **supports HB-5519**, which authorizes the establishment of Catastrophe Savings Accounts and income tax deductions to assist residents in saving their homes.

HB-5519 will provide some much-needed help for these families who have been blindsided by terrible circumstances with little, if any, recourse.

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. More information is available at www.ctcost.org