

Honorable Sen. Catherine Osten and Sen. Philip Miller, Co-Chairs
Planning and Development Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 2100
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: Testimony on Raised Bill No. 421

Dear Co-Chairs Osten and Miller:

I understand that you are considering an Act Concerning Community Empowerment and the Neighborhood Assistance Act, which would require the creation of community investment boards with the power to spend MRSA and PILOT funds. For a town such as Killingworth, this new mandate would be disastrous.

Killingworth is organized under a town charter, and our legislative body is the Town Meeting. Budgets are prepared by the popularly elected Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance. There could not be more direct citizen control of expenditures. The proposals in Bill 421 would remove control from the citizenry as a whole and place it in the hands of appointees.

The bill would also create a hugely cumbersome process for the allocation of \$121,000 in grant money (assuming that number is not reduced for any reason, including the municipal spending cap). We have a limited number of townspeople who are willing to give their time and attention to volunteer government functions, and a great many of them already serve on town boards and commissions. We would have to develop a new set of procedures for the operations of the community investment board, including provisions for data collection, public input, and transparency. And we would have to redesign our budget-making process itself to accommodate the investment board.

I strongly oppose this proposal and urge that you *not* move ahead with it.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Iino