



PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

March 2, 2016

The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent over 96% of Connecticut's population. We appreciate the opportunity to testify on bills of interest to towns and cities.

HB 5457 "An Act Concerning Local Health Districts and Health Directors"

The bill would, among other things, prohibit a local health director of a local health district to engage in private practice, as well require the Department of Public Health (DPH) to have close supervision and oversight of local health departments.

While CCM understands the importance of avoiding conflicts of interest, the prohibitive language would disallow any outside employment, including teaching or other practices to enhance public health efforts. Teaching in particular is an important part of workforce development. Engagement in professional development activities, particularly with emerging public health professionals allows for health directors to develop new insights and innovative solutions to health problems. Municipal health directors are not prohibited from engaging in these activities, therefore there is no rationale for this restriction only applying to local Health District directors.

CCM is also concerned with DPH having close supervision and oversight of local health departments as it is unnecessary. The relationship between state and local health is already articulated in Statute 19a-2a. Local health districts are already under the supervision of local boards of health.

CCM urges the Committee to **take no action** on HB 5457.

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If you have any questions, please contact Mike Muszynski, Advocacy Manager of CCM at mmuszynski@ccm-ct.org or (203) 500-7556.