

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF  
RAISED HOUSE BILL 5545: AN ACT CONCERNING THE APPLICABILITY OF  
CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE STATE BUILDING CODE TO FAIRS AND  
FESTIVALS.**

**Public Safety and Security Committee**

**March 8, 2016**

Good Morning Chairmen Senator Larson and Representative Dargan, Vice Chairmen Senator Coleman and Representative Verrengia, Ranking Members Senator Guglielmo and Representative Zupkus and distinguished members of the Public Safety and Security Committee.

My name is Councilman Tom Lombardi serving the Town of Southington and I additionally serve as the Co-Chair of the Southington Apple Harvest Festival.

I would like to offer testimony in support of Raised House Bill 5545, An Act Concerning the Applicability of Certain Provisions of the State Building Code to Fairs and Festivals.

The Town of Southington, for the past 48 years has been home to a local street fair known as the Southington Apple Harvest Festival.

The Southington Apple Harvest Festival is a no cost event with attractions for people of all ages and is attended by not only residents of Southington, but also thousands of people from all communities across Connecticut. The Festival attracts approximately 75,000 people per year.

Safety procedures and safety planning are at the forefront of every decision that is made for our event. The Fire Department performs inspections on all booths for the following:

- Ensure a working fire extinguisher is present in each booth
- No smoking signs are posted in each booth
- The booths are fire rated
- The booths have correctly installed cooking equipment
- The entire festival site has safe ingress and egress for safety vehicles (performed in conjunction with the Police Department)

A local vendor professionally installs all booths. All booths are secured via concrete buckets on all four sides to ensure the booths are secured and can withstand severe weather conditions.

As this festival has developed over the years, the Town of Southington has invested significantly in the electrical infrastructure of the downtown area, specifically to meet the needs of our Apple Harvest Festival. This investment has added a layer of safety via the direct electrical connections at the ground level.

Section 1(b) of the bill states the Town fair must be approved by the municipality in which the fair is held. The Apple Harvest Festival is a municipal event hosted by the Town of Southington. The Festival undergoes rigorous inspections by our municipal public safety officials as well as our regional health district officials.

We strongly support this legislation, as it will allow our community to fully utilize the limited space available in our downtown area. The current building code prohibits portable structures from being 15 feet horizontally and extending vertically places an unnecessary hardship on our community and this very important event. The Apple Harvest Festival has been, and will continue to be, focused on public safety and we strongly believe that this legislation will not pose any additional risk to the public.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Lombardi  
Southington Town Councilor

Co-Chair-Apple Harvest Festival

Cheryl Lounsbury  
Southington Town Councilor

Co-Chair-Apple Harvest Festival