

Western Connecticut COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS



February 22, 2016

Esteemed Chairs Cassano and Jutila,
Esteemed members of the Government and Elections Committee:

The Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG) **strongly supports HB 5049's** rescheduling of the effective date for the set-aside requirement to 2019 (§13-17 of the bill, *An Act Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations for General Government*). The short period between passage of this mandate and its effective date, and the broad range of projects it covers, has left municipalities and the state poorly prepared to implement it. Premature implementation of this mandate risks holding up project delivery, potentially costing jobs and driving up costs.

To promote timely and efficient use of public funds, WestCOG would respectfully suggest that: a) the prevailing wage threshold also be increased and b) the set-aside requirement only apply to projects meeting that threshold. Such consistency will simplify compliance and allow all levels of government to focus their efforts on high-value contracts.

WestCOG **also supports HB 5246** (*An Act Redefining "Small Contractor" for Purposes of the Set-Aside Program for Small Contractors*). By eliminating inconsistency between state and federal law, this bill simplifies the qualification process for businesses and eases the burden of compliance for municipalities. This is, in our view, a win-win.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Francis R. Pickering".

Francis R. Pickering
Executive Director