Testimony in Favor of **House Bill 5394**
An Act Concerning Endorsements of Town Committee Members
Prepared for the Consideration of the Government Administration and Elections Committee

February 29th, 2016

Senator Cassano, Representative Jutila, and Distinguished Members of the Committee,

We would like to offer testimony in support of House Bill 5394 for the record as we are not able to testify before the Committee today. We are very appreciative that the Committee has chosen to raise this legislation and give it a public hearing.

Town committee chairs have learned that the new signature requirement for persons endorsed as town committee members was an unintended consequence of legislation that passed during the 2015 session. This new provision posed serious logistical problems during the endorsement period this past January. Local party leaders were given notice of this new provision about a week in advance of caucuses and it made the process for acquiring the necessary signatures somewhat difficult. Although the majority of members attended their respective caucuses, not all were present for various reasons. Town chairs across the state worked diligently to comply with this regulation, but it proved to be an arduous task. For instance, two nominated members for the Torrington Democratic Town Committee were in the hospital and one was out of the country during the time in which they needed to sign the required paperwork. Luckily, arrangements were made to have the paperwork signed on the last possible day – it was literally down to the wire. Many chairs found themselves in the same position. The requirement was discouraging to some potential DTC members who were unavailable during the prescribed time between the caucus and the date the paperwork was due.

We urge support of this legislation so that persons endorsed for election as town committee members are exempt from signing the certification of such endorsement. This endorsement paperwork already requires signatures of the caucus chair and secretary. We believe that those signatures suffice in formalizing endorsements and ensuring that the selection process was conducted in compliance with the law.

The undersigned group of town committee chairs and party activists are grateful for this opportunity to submit testimony on this important legislation.

Danielle Palladino, **Torrington Democratic Town Committee Chairwoman**

Audrey Blondin, **30th Senate District Representative to the Connecticut Democratic Party**

Peter J. Y. Brazaitis, **Acting Harwinton Democratic Town Committee Chairman**

Darlene Clouther, **Litchfield Democratic Town Committee Chairwoman**

Leo Colwell, **Norfolk Democratic Town Committee Co-Chair**

Andy Grossman, **New Milford Democratic Town Committee Chairman**

Joe Manes, **Litchfield Democratic Town Committee Vice Chairman**

Candy Perez, **Winsted Democratic Town Committee Chairwoman**

June Peterson, **Norfolk Democratic Town Committee Co-Chair**

David Rosaler, **Goshen Democratic Town Committee Chairman**

Amy McLean Salls, **Simsbury Democratic Town Committee Chairwoman**

Tom Sevigny, **Canton Democratic Town Committee Chairman**

Larry Sweeney, **30th Senate District Representative to the Connecticut Democratic Party**

Jeff Tindall, **8th Senate District Representative to the Connecticut Democratic Party**

Mary Tomolonius, **8th Senate District Representative to the Connecticut Democratic Party**

Myrna Watanabe, **Former Harwinton Democratic Town Committee Chairwoman and former 8th Senate District Representative to the Connecticut Democratic Party**