



**Testimony  
Betsy Gara  
Executive Director  
Connecticut Council of Small Towns  
Before the Planning & Development Committee  
March 4, 2016**

**OPPOSE - HB-5485 - AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL TAXATION**

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) opposes **HB-5485** which would 1) overburden the municipal tax assessment process by eliminating the three year limit on the correction of tax assessments; and 2) create yet another local option property tax exemption.

**Correction of Tax Assessments**

Municipalities must rely on its grand list in developing the municipal budget and determining mil rates. Eliminating the deadline for making adjustments to tax assessments may create difficulties in managing budgets, undermining local operations. This provision also protects taxpayers whose assessments may have been incorrect several years ago. A set period of time in which to correct municipal tax assessments makes sense for both the municipality and the taxpayer.

**Local Property Tax Exemption**

Given the ongoing fiscal challenges facing municipalities, the state must refrain from mandating property tax exemptions, including municipal option tax exemptions, which undermine the ability of towns to provide critical programs and services to residents and shift more of the burden onto the backs of other property taxpayers.