

Testimony by

James Hayden, First Selectman, Town of East Granby

**Before the Planning and Development Committee
March 11, 2016**

**SUPPORT
SUPPORT HB5602: AAC REGIONALISM**

Chairs Senator Osten and Representative Miller and members of the Planning and Development Committee, my name is James Hayden and I serve as First Selectman of East Granby. I have with me today Lisa Pellegrini, the First Selectman in Somers, and Secretary of the Capitol Region Council of Governments. I come before you today in support of **HB5602: AAC REGIONALISM**. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

For more than 45 years, the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) has served Hartford and surrounding municipalities -- now 37 towns with almost 1 million residents -- and helped them gain significant efficiencies in the spending of taxpayer dollars through a wide variety of cooperative purchasing and other regional service sharing initiatives.

We appreciate the goals of the bill to promote regional efforts. In particular, the section of this bill that aligns the state priority of increased efficiency in municipal operations with the ability to use the important tools offered by public purchasing consortia such as those offered by CRCOG is an important step in making the benefits of cooperative purchasing more widespread. Our Capitol Region Purchasing Council has 113 members and saves millions of dollars for the towns participating in the programs offered. Yet, they still encounter hurdles with lack of local ordinance permitting use of cooperative contracts and denial of using state funding when trying to use the contracts and services in place through our various Consortia. This provision would be a big step toward removing those barriers.

In addition, adding the Regional Education Service Centers (RESCs) into the Regional Performance Incentive Program (RPIP) makes sense as 60-80% of local budgets are spent on education. We would encourage the addition of language that balances the funds granted between towns and schools as well as encourage RPIP applications that consolidate areas of town and school back office functions (e.g. IT, Human Resources,

Finance, Internal and External Property Maintenance) so that RESCs and COGs are working together on common issues.

We support HB 5602 and greatly appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony on this proposed bill and look forward to providing any additional assistance the Committee may request.