



**Testimony
Betsy Gara
Executive Director
Connecticut Council of Small Towns
Before the Planning & Development Committee
March 11, 2016**

OPPOSE – SB-419 - AN ACT CONCERNING PROPERTY TAXES FOR NONPROFIT GROUP HOMES, which exempts from local property taxes permanent housing owned by, or held in trust for, federally tax-exempt organizations organized exclusively for charitable purposes.

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) **opposes SB-419** which would create yet another local property tax exemption, further eroding scarce municipal revenues.

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

Property taxpayers already shoulder the burden for funding education, public safety, transportation and other local services. It is unfair to enact legislation that will shift more of the burden onto the backs of other property taxpayers, such as homeowners and businesses.

COST urges lawmakers to oppose SB-419.