

March 3, 2017

**Statement in *Opposition* to Raised Bill No. 7170 An Act Concerning the Integration of  
Municipal Health Departments into Regional Health Districts**

**and**

***Support* of HB 5757 An Act Prohibiting the Department of Public Health from Requiring the  
Consolidation of Municipal Health Authorities.**

To whom it may concern,

As a resident of the City of Milford I am extremely concerned with the Department of Public Health's proposal for the integration of local health departments into regional health districts. The Milford Health Department provides a consistently high standard of service to our community that encompasses a broad range of public health services including school nursing, vaccination clinics, emergency preparedness and shelter operations, housing code enforcement and food safety inspections. All of these services are available to our residents and businesses 24/7 and at no additional cost. A local health department that is readily available to its residents, businesses and other municipal agencies is an invaluable, cost-effective resource that simply cannot be replicated on a regional basis. In our current economic climate of "doing more with less" this seems particularly counter intuitive.

In my professional capacity as the Environmental Case Manager at the Milford Health Department I have the privilege and responsibility of working on a daily basis with individuals and families who find themselves facing extraordinary hardship due to eviction, house fires, illness or housing code violations. As a local municipal agency we are able to respond to these situations in a timely and comprehensive manner. We have developed strong professional relationships with key social service partners and have the capacity to ensure that client needs are addressed. In my experience this level of community service and case management is impossible to achieve in a regional model of care. To this point for example, the regional offices of several state agencies currently rely on the Milford Health Department to provide supportive services to their clients in our community.

While I understand and support the efforts to provide excellent public health services to all communities in Connecticut I strongly disagree that regionalization is the answer. Rather than dissolving those agencies that are providing excellent services we should be working together to ensure that their strengths are replicated throughout the state.

Sincerely,

Lesley Darling, MA

Milford Health Department

