Co-Chairs and members of the Public Health Committee, I, Maritza Bond a Director of Health for the City of Bridgeport respectfully submit written testimony to propose that the raised bill 7170 be carefully reviewed to ensure that access to public health services will not be jeopardized. While I support the overall concept to work efficiently and streamline services, we already have legislation (CGS 19a-223) which enables health departments/districts to share resources. In addition, raised bill 7170 does not include an evidence based approach and/ or model that will ensure that the regionalizing health departments will not have a negative financial burden on a local level.

As a public health leader in the largest city in the state, I would like to propose that we continue a dialogue on working towards improving our public structure. Nonetheless, the current legislation being proposed has a number of gaps that need careful review prior to enacting legislation. Below you will find areas that should be taken into consideration:

- **Essential Public Health Services**: The proposed raised bill does not include any language around ensuring that the propose structure will not reduce or eliminate services

- **Public Health Accreditation**: The level of quality for our current Public Health system has been put in place. Regionalization may jeopardize the ability for health departments that are or are working towards accreditation.
Environmental Services: The proposed raised bill does not include environmental as a specialty on the executive governance board.

Financial Proposal: the financial cost is not clear. RB 7170 is proposing COG-based funding at a per capita rate of $1.85; yet the current Governor’s budget calls for a REDUCTION in funding of local health.

Governance: RB 7170 statutorily eliminates municipal governance of public health: municipalities will no longer have the right to decide the merits of joining or leaving a district; we will relinquish the public health needs of town residents to an Executive Board of the COG.

Director of Health: Reducing the term from four years to two years is of concern with building relationships and trusts within the community.

Thank you for your support. For additional information, please contact me at (203) 576-7680

Respectively Submitted by,

Maritza Bond, MPH
Director of Health & Social Services
City of Bridgeport
999 Broad St.
Bridgeport, CT 06604