

**TOWN OF MANSFIELD
OFFICE OF THE TOWN MANAGER**



John C. Carrington, P.E.
Interim Town Manager

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Dear Members of the House of Representatives and its Committees:

I am John C. Carrington, Interim Town Manager of the Town of Mansfield, CT. Unfortunately, I am unable to testify at the special public hearing on Friday, March 23 in the House Chambers on the recommendations of the *State Commission on Fiscal Stability and Economic Growth*.

I am writing this letter in support of the recommendations.

The proposals below are of particular interest to Mansfield:

- Allowing towns, COGs or a consortia of COGs, the option to raise local revenue for capital projects by authorizing them to impose supplemental, time limited, sales or property taxes by special referenda.
- Allowing towns, or through their local COG, to charge fees for Services in Lieu of Taxes (SILOTS). These would be imposed on non-profit colleges and hospitals, while allowing these institutions to maintain their property tax exempt status.
- Requiring the State pay a higher PILOT payment to municipalities, especially central cities, on the properties it owns.
- Enabling COGs to levy an additional sales tax of up to 0.5 percent for regional economic development and shared service arrangements.
- Permitting towns to increase fees for use of the public rights of way, storm water fees, hotels, car rentals, restaurants and other services.
- Providing that non-union labor be permitted on rehabilitation projects costing under \$1 million.
- Providing towns with a single neutral arbitrator for municipal labor negotiations.
- Protecting a town's fund balance of 15 percent or less from being used to pay for labor contract settlements.


Any increase in PILOT payments would be advantageous to all the towns and cities which rely upon them. The payment of PILOT funds is extremely important to the Town of Mansfield as we are the home of the University of Connecticut's main campus. Tax exempt property accounts for over 56% of Mansfield's total grand list. Thus, any non-payment or short payment of PILOT

negatively impacts Mansfield and causes a reduction in services and/or an increase in local property taxes.

Additionally, a town or city should not be penalized for having a strong fund balance. Any consideration of protecting a town's fund balance of 15% or less from being used in the payment of labor contracts would actually reward a town for being fiscally healthy, a behavior we should all encourage.

I urge you all to support these recommendations. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



John C. Carrington, P.E.
Interim Town Manager