



## *JUDICIARY COMMITTEE*

March 6, 2019

The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent 99% of Connecticut's population.

**HB 7220      An Act Establishing a Right to Appeal the Decision of a Municipal Ethics Board to the Superior Court Under the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act**

CCM **opposes** HB 7220 as towns and cities already have a process in place to manage ethics complaints. This bill would be an unnecessary burden by allowing a dissatisfied individual from perpetuating a decision made at the local level by permitting an appeal under the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act (UAPA).

A majority of Connecticut municipalities already have an ethics code in place that meets the needs of their community (several are in the process of drafting a code). Over the past 10 years, CCM has conducted 55 separate ethics workshops attended by nearly 1,400 local officials – not including 4 scheduled ethics workshops this year. This does not include ethics training conducted by CIRMA and the Connecticut Association of Municipal Attorneys (CAMA) which is offered several times each year. These workshops are in addition to several other tools CCM provides to members, such as ethics information kits, presentations and assistance in creating a new or updating existing local ethics policies.

Municipal official's intentions are not to elude ethical practices, as municipalities benefit from having ethics policies and codes in place. Each municipality is allowed the opportunity to develop policies and procedures that work for their community. To that end, allowing a decision to be appealed under the UAPA will bring confusion to the judicial system with the varying policies and procedures that exist.

In many instances, individuals use the ethics process for political purposes against public officials. This proposal would only exacerbate those situations by affording them the opportunity to appeal utilizing the UAPA which will create an administrative and fiscal burden for municipal employees and unnecessarily clog up the courts.

CCM urges the Committee to **oppose HB 7220**.

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If you have any questions, please contact Mike Muszynski, Advocacy Manager of CCM at [mmuszynski@ccm-ct.org](mailto:mmuszynski@ccm-ct.org) or 203-500-7556.