

PA 11-123

HB6412

House	3693-3702	10
Planning & Development	1034-1037, 1042-1044, 1047, 1162, 1178, 1180-1181, 1308- 1310	15
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**H – 1102**

**CONNECTICUT  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS  
2011**

**VOL.54  
PART 11  
3438 – 3771**

cd/rgd  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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wisdom, thanks, honor, power and strength forever.

Amen.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Thank you.

Would Representative Elaine O'Brien of the 61st District please come to the dais and lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

REP. O'BRIEN (61st):

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Are there any announcements or introductions? Any announcements or introductions? If not, will the Clerk please call Calendar 133.

THE CLERK:

State of Connecticut House of Representatives  
Calendar for Thursday, May 19, 2011.

On page 5, Calendar 133, House Bill Number 6412,  
AN ACT CONCERNING THE SMALL TOWN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, favorable report of the Committee on Planning and Development.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Linda Gentile, you have the floor, madam.

REP. GENTILE (104th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and good afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, I move for acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

The question is acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

Will you remark?

REP. GENTILE (104th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will make Small Town Economic Assistance Programs, otherwise known as STEAP, available to groups of municipalities and hopefully encourage regional cooperation.

I move for passage of the bill.

Before we do that, Mr. Speaker, the Clerk is in possession of LCO Number 6510. I ask that the Clerk call it and I be granted leave to summarize.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Will the Clerk please call LCO 6510, which will be designated House Amendment Schedule "A."

THE CLERK:

LCO 6510, House "A," offered by Representatives  
Gentile, Cassano, Aman and Senator Fasano.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

The Representative seeks leave of the Chamber to summarize. Any objection? Hearing none, Representative, you may proceed with summarization.

REP. GENTILE (104th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, what this does is two things, actually. It makes it perfectly clear that the maximum dollar amount of the grant would be no more than \$500,000. Whether that's applied to an individual municipality or to a group, each individual group would receive the maximum of 500,000. And furthermore it makes it effective from passage.

I move for acceptance.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

The question is on adoption.

Will you remark further?

REP. GENTILE (104th):

On adoption.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Remark further?

Representative Aman.

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REP. AMAN (14th):

Yes. Good morning, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Good morning, sir.

REP. AMAN (14th):

This is an amendment that's been brought forward by both the chairs and ranking members. After it had gone through committee there were several people that asked regarding the intent of how money should be spent.

And while I think the four of us understood what the bill was supposed to mean, the feeling was if it was confusing to some people it may be confusing to others, and therefore we came up with the amendment that makes it very clear that any one municipality can receive up to \$500,000 less whatever their portion of an interlocal agreement that they have signed.

The \$500,000 number is really at this point fairly academic because in the past it was limited -- or the last few years no grant was greater than \$250,000. And it's in my understanding that these grants may not be included in the final budgets that are coming forward.

So in that regard I think it does set the law

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very clear for in the future and I urge my colleagues to approve the amendment.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Thank you, Representative.

Would you care to remark further on the amendment?

Representative Sawyer.

REP. SAWYER (55th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Good afternoon.

REP. SAWYER (55th):

Good afternoon.

The Small Town Economic Assistance Program is one that has given an incredible boost to towns that have not been able to play in the past because they, before it was put into action, they had to apply for urban act dollars. And by the time the large cities funded their large projects the small towns weren't able to receive funding.

I can tell you about projects that have gone to some ball fields. I can tell you some projects that have gone to some historical projects that go all the way back to the revolutionary era. But I can tell you

also about some main street projects that have been remarkable in turning around some of our town centers. But when you have some of these smallest of towns that want to do a regional project and it's going to cost more than half a million dollars, to give them the ability to do that together I think is sound, sound fiscal prudence for the State to look towards giving access to a group of towns to be able to accomplish one project.

And I would like to thank all the people that worked so hard on putting this language together because I know there was different differing opinions and I would like to compliment the chairwoman for all of her work on this and the ranking member.

Thank you.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Thank you, Representative.

Representative Candelora.

REP. CANDELORA (86th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Good afternoon.

REP. CANDELORA (86th):

If I may, a quick question to the proponent of



the amendment?

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Please proceed, sir.

REP. CANDELORA (86th):

As I understand it, I appreciate the intent of the bill for us to be able to regionalize. Do all the municipalities, if they get together to have a joint project, do they all have to be STEAP eligible towns?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Gentile.

REP. GENTILE (104th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes. It does not change the eligibility factor at all. It just allows them to group together.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Candelora.

REP. CANDELORA (86th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I appreciate that answer. I think it's a great program, but I wouldn't want to see us diluting the pot by allowing municipalities who are not eligible to get in.

Thank you.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Thank you, Representative.

Would you care to remark further on the amendment? Care to remark further on the amendment? If not, let me try your minds. All those in favor of the amendment, please signify by saying, aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

All opposed, nay.

The ayes have it. The amendment is adopted.

Remark further on the bill as amended?

Representative Aman.

REP. AMAN (14th):

Yes. Less than 24 hours ago I happened to stand here and say that we continually have things that we're trying to do to let municipalities continue to work together and that that bill might have corrected everything.

And at the time I was speaking I forgot that this was going to be the first one out of the box today in that once again we are trying to write legislation that will encourage and make possible municipalities to work together. And again, this is one more step in

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the process of attempting to look at the state of Connecticut as a whole for the municipalities and not as 169 entities. And yet it still is able to give each of those municipalities control over their participation, what they can and cannot do. So I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Thank you, Representative.

Would you care to remark further? Would you care to remark further? If not, staff and guests please come to the well of the House. Members take their seats. The machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll call. Members to the Chamber. The House is voting by roll call. Members to the Chamber, please.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? Please check the roll call board to make sure your vote has been properly cast. If all the members have voted the machine will be locked and the Clerk will please take a tally. The Clerk, please announce the tally.

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THE CLERK:

House Bill 6412 as amended by House "A."

Total Number voting 142

Necessary for adoption 72

Those voting Yea 142

Those voting Nay 0

Those absent and not voting 9

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

The bill as amended is passed.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar Number 158.

THE CLERK:

On page 36, Calendar 158, House Bill Number 6413,  
AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE'S CONSOLIDATED PLAN FOR  
HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, favorable report of  
the Committee on Appropriations.

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Representative Linda Gentile.

REP. GENTILE (104th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sorry for the delay.

Mr. Speaker, this bill adds technical --

SPEAKER DONOVAN:

Excuse me, Representative. Do you want to move  
the bill?

REP. GENTILE (104th):

**JOINT  
STANDING  
COMMITTEE  
HEARINGS**

**PLANNING AND  
DEVELOPMENT  
PART 4  
965 - 1310**

**2011**

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REP. GENTILE: We appreciate your time. Are there any questions or comments from our committee members? Thank you, Martie.

MARTIN MADOR: Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: There was an oversight on our -- on our agenda, and I'd like to have, I think, Commissioner Ron Angelo come up please next. We apologize for that oversight.

RON ANGELO: Thank you. No problem at all. It's actually been very interesting discussions in listening too.

Good morning, Senator Cassano, Representative Gentile, Representative Aman, Senator Fasano. My name is Ron Angelo, Acting Commissioner of Department of Economics and Community Development. I'm here to discuss three bills, three bills that the Department is in favor of. In the spirit of time, I'll just go over them very, very quickly. You have our testimony.

The first one is S.B. 1047, an act concerning changes to certain housing statutes. This is an agency resubmission of a technical -- of technical changes from 2010 legislative session which successfully passed the Senate, but due to time constraints did not pass the House. As the title implies, the bill was meant to address several technical issues in several different housing development statutes. These proposed changes will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of impacted programs. And again, you have that testimony. We go through each section in that testimony, the parts that are impacted.

The second bill is H.B. 6412, an act concerning the Small Town Economic Assistance Program, or

HB6413

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STEAP. This would allow the Small Town Economic Assistance Program to fund multi town projects, which is consistent with the state's efforts to promote regionalism and cost sharing. Towns would be able to apply jointly for larger projects by partnering to address a mutual need. This bill seeks to maximize the ability of communities to apply for funding for regional projects which in turn will create a greater return on investment for the state.

And the third bill that we are -- that I am speaking in favor of is 6413, an act concerning the state's consolidated plan for housing and community development. DECD recognizes that housing is both an economic and socioeconomic driver and the ability of quality affordable housing is critical to the state's future economic growth. We also recognize the importance of strategic planning. However, preparing the long-range state housing plan is redundant and duplicative during this time of unprecedented fiscal constraints, it is imperative that we eliminate redundant and/or duplicative efforts.

By this legislation, DECD is proposing that the state long-range housing plan be eliminated in the HUD required consolidated plan for Housing and Community Development serve as the official state housing plan. Additionally, DECD would continue to work with Connecticut Housing Finance Authority and other partners when preparing this housing report.

And for now I'll stop there. Again, you have my written testimony. I'd be happy to take any questions.

REP. GENTILE: Commissioner, thank you. Again, I apologize for that oversight. I do have a

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question concerning the STEAP money.

Since this would involve multi towns and cities and larger projects, would there be any incentive created in that, for instance for larger, fuller funds?

RON ANGELO: Well, I think much like the small cities account that we deal with, there -- there would be in such a way that additional leveraging can come into play. We can look at larger projects more seriously versus right now we're looking at multiple applications coming in and having it divvy up those funds. We can now say look, this is a big project that will benefit many municipalities and -- and therefore can potentially get a larger chunk of funding.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you for your answer. Are there any other questions or comments from our committee members? Representative Aman.

REP. AMAN: If you can just recap very quickly for us the status of STEAP grants or small city grants and other -- those things, and the governor's proposed budget? How is the funding in the budget for future years compared to in the past?

RON ANGELO: I've got some of my staff here. Speaking to that? I don't know if I have that exact answer.

REP. AMAN: You can have someone get back to us. It's not a --

RON ANGELO: Yeah, we'll get to you.

REP. AMAN: As long as we have the information. I would hate to go forward with the STEAP program



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that says we're going to fund large projects in a regional basis and then find out that's great except there's no money to fund for large projects in a regional basis.

RON ANGELO: Yes, we -- I can get you that answer of a breakdown budgetary wise for each of those.

REP. AMAN: All right, thank you very much.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you. Any further questions or comments? Thank you, Commissioner. All right, since we're alternating testimony at this point, can I call on Lisa Biagerelli? Good afternoon, Lisa.

LISA BIAGERELLI: Hello. (Inaudible).

REP. GENTILE: Excuse me, Lisa, if I can interrupt you. Could you please put your microphone on? Thank you.

LISA BIAGERELLI: Better. My name is Lisa Biagerelli. I'm the tax collector for the city of Norwalk, and with me I have Al Palumbo, Jr., who is the assistant tax collector for the city. Both of us have in excess of 20 years of experience collecting taxes, and we're here on behalf of the Connecticut Tax Collectors' Association to address Senate Bill 80. And also, while we're up here, House Bill 5114. And I have submitted written testimony which I will not trouble you by my reading.

Basically, the Tax Collectors' Association's objection to these bills involves the extension of discretion in collecting taxes. And most of our effectiveness, in my experience, is derived from our ability to tell our taxpayers that we treat everybody the same. And it concerns me greatly that I would be given the discretion to

LISA BIAGERELLI: Thank you very much for your time.

REP. GENTILE: Brian Sear?

BRIAN SEAR: Senator Cassano, Representative Gentile, and honorable members of the Planning and Development Committee, I thank you for this opportunity to speak before you.

I supplied written testimony. I'm Brian Sear, First Selectman of Canterbury, Connecticut. I just found out we're a postage stamp town that's irrelevant. So I guess everything else is superfluous from here on.

No, I'll -- I'm here to give the other side of the story, with all due respect. I am here to address the concept of regionalism that is -- whose wording is in a number of proposed bills. I haven't heard a formal definition. I'm assuming the intent behind that is regionalism would reduce cost and increase deficiency and that's good for all of us. And I'd simply like to explain and demonstrate that regionalism is and has been alive and well in many of the towns in our state.

What is the proper incentive toward regionalism? Well, in our town, it's the budget. We have 129 line items in our general government budget. Those are proposed. Those are put forth before the townspeople. They discuss them. They vote on them. And then through the year, those are analyzed on a weekly basis as how we're measuring up to them. There's incredible pressure in our town to lower budgets and cut out excess waste. And there's great scrutiny throughout the town on -  
- on everything we do.

(SB496)  
(HB5182)  
(HB6100)  
(HB5332)  
(SB495)  
(SB894)  
(HB5928)  
(HB6412)

And that's led us to, quote, regionalize or share services. Some of those we've done on our own. Some we've done with agencies such as NECOG, Northeast Council of Governments. A brief list of those we share with other towns and entities, the fire marshal, building inspector, revaluation services, animal control services, engineering services, GIS services, and even hazardous waste collection and catch basin cleaning. We -- we've done that, and it saved significant amount of money for our town, and we continue to do that and analyze whatever areas we can to save.

I am a little bit concerned in terms of an outside entity or pressure coming in and kind of dictating how we would go about regionalizing. One thing that I think is important I learned through the NIMS classes I take in National Instrument Management Systems, they talk in there about span of control, which is basically what is the most efficient way to work together under a kind of a leadership organizing principle.

It's worked very well at our COG. We have 12 towns involved. We talk on a regular basis. A lot of these items that I mentioned were made possible through our sharing between them. There's other regions we're part of, such as the Region for Emergency Management Program, and the EWID program whose numbers approach about 40 towns. And I'll tell you the span of control is lost in -- in something of that size. So I would -- I would ask that the structure of the COG as we have up in the northeast corner be kept in place because it's working very well.

And I'll end up with kind of a philosophical position in terms of regionalism, is it work in

all cases and what's the litmus test as to when it would work better and not work as well. And I think it comes back to, it makes sense to regionalize those services that do not have an immediate impact on the uniqueness of -- of each of our towns, and try to preserve those aspects that are unique to each town. Because I do believe that Connecticut, all those fiefdoms in Connecticut, maybe we can't compete on the worldwide level quite as sharply, but it adds to the character of our state, and I'm very proud to be part of that -- that character and with all those fiefdoms.

So, all those things I've mentioned, they do not have an impact on the town of Canterbury other than to save us money and -- and to help us be more efficient. And as this concept of regionalization is discussed and put forth, I'd like myself and other small towns to be part of the discussion, working together to answer some of those questions I think we're all looking at is how we share, what we share when we share and who we share with, and be all on the same page. And I'm open for any questions.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you, sir. Are there any questions or comments from our committee members? Thank you for your time.

BRIAN SEAR: Thank you.

REP. GENTILE: Ron Thomas.

RON THOMAS: Good afternoon, Senator Cassano, Representative Gentile, members of the P and D Committee. My name is Ron Thomas with the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities. I'm happy to be here to testify on a few bills that concern the towns and cities.

I'd like to start with Senate Bill 130

HB6100  
HB5332  
SB495  
SB505  
SB64  
SB80  
SB496  
HB5782  
HB5580  
SB507  
SB894  
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HB6412

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of new construction, we oppose this bill. It's going to create a 25 million hole in municipal budgets at a time when towns and cities are cutting services, laying off employees, and in reluctantly examining raising taxes, \$25 million could make a bad situation drastically worse.

We've testified on Senate Bill 507 before. We'd overturn the Conway/Wilton case, and you have my testimony in support of this type of proposal.

With regard to Senate Bill 894 concerning the consolidation of noneducational services, we think this is (inaudible) municipal cooperation initiative that challenges communities to seek greater efficiencies. We urge the community to require school districts to cooperate in this effort and to focus more clearly on building a grounds maintenance and back office functions such as human resources, financial management and other noneducation activities so that school districts could focus more directly on education services.

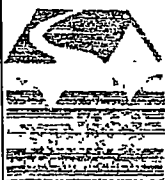
With regard to 5928 -- I'll be done quickly -- we support this proposal. Again, it would allow our COGs and CEOs to function as regional -- regional asset districts.

With regard to House Bill 6412 regarding STEAP, we support this proposal and think it will help with some smart work-related decisions. So I'll stop right there and entertain questions.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you, Ron. Questions, comments?  
Senator Fasano.

SENATOR FASANO: Thank you for coming to testify.  
On the -- I know you were ambivalent on the  
statewide mill rate for automobiles. You know,

HB5580



1000 FRIENDS of Connecticut

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*PRESERVING, CONSERVING, AND GROWING SMART*

Planning and Development Committee  
Public Hearing  
March 2, 2011  
(SB 64, HB5782, HB6412)

My name is Susan Merrow. I chair the Board of Trustees of 1000 Friends of Connecticut, an organization which works to promote a better economy and environment through more responsible, sustainable land use decisions that favor regionalism, mass transit, property tax reform, healthy cities, open space preservation, and sensibly sited housing. Our mission is commonly called "smart growth."

On behalf of 1000 Friends, I want to commend the Committee for bringing forward a rich and varied collection of bills that seek to promote regional approaches to land use decision making and to relieve municipal overdependence on the property tax, two key ingredients in growing smarter. The need to achieve grand list growth in each of 169 insular towns in order to meet property tax demands has driven too many short-sighted land use decisions to number. Among these bills are many provisions that will help our towns work together with their neighbors to grow in ways that will benefit them and our state's economy in the long run.

To highlight just a few of these commendable measures, I would like to recommend support of SB 64 AAC Alternatives to Property Tax. While the specifics of this bill must be worked out to ensure that these alternatives also promote sound land use decision making, it is important to preserve the notion that in paying alternative taxes, their property taxes will be reduced.

HB 6412 AAC the Small Town Economic Assistance Program offers an excellent way to encourage inter-town cooperation rather than competition. STEAP grants promote growth at the level of small and rural towns. This bill would help ensure that this growth is smart.

HB 5782 AAC the Hotel Tax brings back an effort that began last year with the MORE Commission to find appropriate revenue streams to promote economic development. It differs from last year's bill in that it sends the revenue to economic development entities rather than to regional planning entities like COG's. This should be amended in order to ensure maximum smart growth impact.

We look forward to working with you as you put these very strong measures into a commendable smart growth package that will take our state forward into a better planned, more prosperous future.

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line 84



Connecticut Chapter  
645 Farmington Ave.  
Hartford, Connecticut 06105

Martin Mador, Legislative Chair

Planning and Development Committee  
March 2, 2011

Testimony In Favor of

- SB 495 AAC the Provision of Services by Regional Councils of Government
- SB 64 AAC Alternatives to Property Tax
- HB 5782 AAC the Hotel Tax
- HB 6100 AAC Regional Property Tax Revenue Sharing
- HB 5332 AA Requiring Municipalities That Regionalize to Provide Property Tax Relief
- HB 5928 AA Authorizing Regional Assets Investments
- HB 6412 AAC the Small Town Economic Assistance Program
- SB 64 AAC Alternatives to Property Tax
- SB 894 AAC the Consolidation of non Educational Services
- SB 507 AAC Municipal Liability for Activities on Recreational Facilities

I am Martin Mador, 130 Highland Ave., Hamden, CT 06518. I am the volunteer Legislative Chair for the Sierra Club-Connecticut Chapter, a director of Rivers Alliance and the Quinnipiac River Watershed Assn, and serve on the 1000 Friends Advisory Board. I hold a Masters of Environmental Management degree from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.

SB 507

Restoration of municipal liability protection for no-fee use of open space is a very high priority. Towns and political subdivisions of the state such as MDC have closed open space in the past for fear of liability, and may do so in the future. We sincerely thank the Democratic and Republican members of the Waterbury delegation for introducing SB 507, and ask that the committee consider this bill in conjunction with others heard previously.

When I testified on HB5780-Interlocal Agreements on Feb. 18, I said:

The Sierra Club recognizes that atomization of Connecticut government into 169 independent children of the state, while useful in giving people a strong sense of home and place, causes a torrent of significant environmental and economic problems. It is our position that fostering municipal cooperation and regional governance is a necessary step for the well-being and future viability of our state, as well as our high environmental quality of life.

SB496

More specifically, we need:

- COGs recognized as the appropriate and preferable path to regionalism
- incentives for RPAs and CEOs to convert to the COG format
- financial incentives for towns to work with their COG

Testimony to the  
**Planning & Development Committee**

made by

**Brian H. Sear, Canterbury First Selectman**

February 3, 2011

Thank you for this opportunity to discuss the concept of regionalism and its benefits to our State. Today I am here to address the following bills:

- Proposed S.B. No. 496 AN ACT CONCERNING A MUNICIPAL TAX REVENUE SHARING SYSTEM.
- Proposed H.B. No. 5782 AN ACT CONCERNING THE HOTEL TAX.
- Proposed H.B. No. 6100 AN ACT CONCERNING REGIONAL PROPERTY TAX REVENUE SHARING.
- H.B. No. 5332 (COMM) AN ACT REQUIRING MUNICIPALITIES THAT REGIONALIZE TO PROVIDE PROPERTY TAX RELIEF.
- Proposed S.B. No. 495 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROVISION OF SERVICES BY REGIONAL COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENT.
- Proposed S.B. No. 894 AN ACT CONCERNING THE CONSOLIDATION OF NON EDUCATIONAL SERVICES.
- Proposed H.B. No. 5928 AN ACT AUTHORIZING REGIONAL ASSETS INVESTMENTS.
- H.B. No. 6412 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE SMALL TOWN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

“Regionalism” is being widely discussed as a solution to a host of perceived problems in our State. I think it's important to define this term before we figure out its usefulness, and prior to enacting legislation to promote or protect its use.

If by “regionalism” you mean Towns (or entities within Towns) working together to define and then implement sharing services to increase efficiencies and save taxpayer dollars, then this has been going on (and continues) for quite some time. First Selectmen and Town Managers are under extreme scrutiny in the preparation and implementation of their budgets. Canterbury's General government budget alone has 129 line items, each of which is proposed, confirmed and then tracked over the course of the fiscal year. This pressure and transparency is a key motivator for Towns to constantly find ways to get “more with less.” In Canterbury's case this has resulted in us sharing (regionalizing) with other Towns the following: Animal Control, Building Inspector, Fire Marshall, Engineering, Property Revaluation, and even catch basin cleaning. Some of this is done on a town to town basis and others through our council of governments. We are currently researching other areas of possible sharing. I'm constantly in touch with other Selectmen in the area to discuss possible sharing opportunities.



Does this mean all Town services should be shared? And with whom? What is the point at which "regionalizing" becomes harmful, more costly and inefficient? What is the ideal "span of control" of shared services?

My own personal litmus test is that services that do not define the character of an individual Town lend themselves best to "regionalizing", while those that are unique should be kept within the smallest entity. Those services listed above have saved taxpayer money and increased efficiency without detracting from our Town's identity. I believe others services such as senior services, recreation, zoning and assessment could have a detrimental effect on the Town. Ongoing discussion of this question is extremely fruitful.

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I hope that you will include direct experience from Town leaders in achieving a consensus of what is meant when we use the term "regionalism", and consider the fact that many of those initiatives that seem new are actually presently in place and don't need to be re-invented, just encouraged. With all due respect, I tend to think the Towns know best what is best to regionalize at a given time, and with whom.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment. I would be pleased to address any questions committee members may have on this subject.



**TESTIMONY**  
of the  
**CONNECTICUT CONFERENCE OF MUNICIPALITIES**  
to the  
**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

March 2, 2011

The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local governments - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent over 90% of Connecticut's population. We appreciate the opportunity to testify on the following bill of interest to towns and cities:

**H.B. 6412, "An Act Concerning the Small Town Economic Assistance Program"**

CCM supports this bill.

H.B. 6412 would allow State Small Town Economic Assistance (STEAP) grants to be used jointly by multiple towns, as long as the municipalities are STEAP-eligible towns.

This proposal would encourage regional cooperation and increase government efficiencies. Further, it helps revitalize rural and suburban areas, while allowing them to maintain their local character.

CCM urges you to support H.B. 6412.

Thank you.

## ## ##

If you have any questions, please contact Jim Finley ([jfinley@ccm-ct.org](mailto:jfinley@ccm-ct.org)) or Ron Thomas ([rthomas@ccm-ct.org](mailto:rthomas@ccm-ct.org)) at (203) 498-3000.

**TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE**

**March 2, 2011**

*Ron Angelo, Acting Commissioner  
Department of Economic and Community Development*

**HB 6412 AN ACT CONCERNING THE SMALL TOWN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE  
PROGRAM**

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Good morning Senator Casano, Representative Gentile, Senator Fasano, Representative Aman and members of the committee. My name is Ron Angelo and I am the Acting Commissioner of the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD). I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you to discuss DECD's support for HB 6412 An Act Concerning the Small Town Economic Assistance Program.

HB 6412 would allow the Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) to fund multi-town projects which is consistent with the state's efforts to promote regionalism and cost sharing. Towns would be able to apply jointly for a larger project by partnering to address a mutual need. Currently, towns must submit separate applications if they are working on a joint project. This would allow one application to be submitted on behalf of multiple towns.

The savings realized through this new approach would be significant for several reasons. First, soft costs, such as architectural drawings and engineering plans would be reduced because only one contractor would need to be hired. Second, the savings from the soft costs could be redirected to fund the hard cost portion of the project.

Additionally, this would minimize the administrative burden for the towns and for the state. One application would be submitted by the towns through a lead town and one contract would be executed between the lead town and the state.

This bill seeks to maximize the ability of communities to apply for funding for regional projects, which in turn will create a greater return on an investment for the state. Allowing towns to submit proposals on a regional basis would also support the state's ongoing efforts to promote regionalism.

We are confident that allowing for multi-jurisdictional grants through STEAP will be successful and we look forward to working with the Governor and legislature on this important issue.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our comments.

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CEOs to become COGs, so CEOs should be dropped from the bill. Otherwise, we have only high praise for this important bill.

HB 6412 authorizes STEAP grants to groups of towns. This would promote regional projects and cooperation, so we endorse the bill. However, once again, we feel such arrangements should always go through the COGs.

SB 64 supports creation of alternative funding mechanisms for towns. We see reliance on property taxes one of the prime reasons for the destructive land use decisions we make, such as suburban sprawl and destruction of greenfields. A host of funding mechanisms, such as allocation of sales taxes, need to be crafted.

The bill recognizes that taxpayers will want reassurance that creation of additional taxes will be offset by reduction in property taxes. Unfortunately, the current crisis demands increasing revenue across the state, so this part of the bill, important as it is, would come at a very inopportune time.

SB 894 raises the issue of consolidation of services. However, the context of this bill is very narrow. We suggest broadening it to encompass multi-district consolidations, and to functions found both in educational and municipal services.

The Sierra Club thanks the Committee both for the public hearing on these worthy bills, and for the opportunity to once again to provide a short, but important, cheerleading sermon on regionalism.

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**CONNECTICUT  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
SENATE**

**PROCEEDINGS  
2011**

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SENATE

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Moving now to calendar page 18, where we have a number of items. The first: Calendar 543, House Bill Number 6508.

Madam President, move this item on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Calendar 544, House Bill Number 6412.

Move to place the item on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Continuing on calendar page 18, Calendar 546, House Bill Number 6538.

Madam President, move to place this item on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Calendar 547, House Bill Number 6440.

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Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call's been ordered in the Senate on the Consent Calendar. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber. Immediate roll call's been ordered in the Senate on the Consent Calendar. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.

THE CLERK:

Madam President, the items placed...

THE CHAIR:

I would ask the Chamber to be quiet please so we can hear the call of the Calendar for the Consent Calendar.

Thank you.

Please proceed, Mr. Clerk

THE CLERK:

Madam President, the items placed on the first Consent Calendar begin on calendar page 5, Calendar 336, House Bill 5697.

Calendar page 7, Calendar 421, Substitute for House Bill 6126.

Calendar page 8, Calendar 449, Senate Bill 1149.

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Calendar page 10, Calendar 470, Substitute for House Bill 5340. Calendar 474, Substitute for House Bill 6274. Calendar 476, House Bill 6635.

Calendar page 12, Calendar 499, Substitute for House Bill 6638. Calendar 500, House Bill 6614. Calendar 508, House Bill 6222.

Calendar page 13, Calendar 511, House Bill 6356. Calendar 512, Substitute for House Bill 6422. Calendar 514, House Bill 6590. Calendar 515, House Bill 6221. Calendar 516, House Bill 6455.

Calendar page 14, Calendar 517, House Bill 6350. Calendar 519, House Bill 5437. Calendar 522, House Bill 6303.

Calendar page 15, Calendar 523, Substitute for House Bill 6499. Calendar 524, House Bill 6490. Calendar 525, House Bill 5780. Calendar 526, House Bill 6513. Calendar 527, Substitute for House Bill 6532.

Calendar page 16, Calendar 528, House Bill 6561. Calendar 529, Substitute for House Bill 6312. Calendar 530, Substitute for House Bill 5032. Calendar 532, House Bill 6338.

Calendar page 17, Calendar 533, Substitute for House Bill 6325. Calendar 534, House Bill 6352.



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Calendar 536, House Bill 5300. Calendar 537, House  
Bill 5482.

calendar page 18, Calendar 543, House Bill 6508.

Calendar 544, House Bill 6412. Calendar 546,  
Substitute for House Bill 6538. Calendar 547,  
Substitute for House Bill 6440. Calendar 548,  
Substitute for House Bill 6471.

Calendar page 19, Calendar 550, Substitute for  
House Bill 5802. Calendar 551, House Bill 6433.  
Calendar 552, House Bill 6413. Calendar 553,  
Substitute for House Bill 6227.

Calendar page 20, Calendar 554, Substitute for  
House Bill 5415. Calendar 557, Substitute for House  
Bill 6318. Calendar 558, Substitute for House Bill  
6565.

Calendar page 21, Calendar 559, Substitute for  
House Bill 6636.

Calendar page 22, Calendar 563, Substitute for  
House Bill 6600. Calendar 564, Substitute for House  
Bill 6598. Calendar 566, House Bill 5585.

Calendar page 23, Calendar 568, Substitute for  
House Bill 6103. Calendar 570, Substitute for House  
Bill 6336. Calendar 573, Substitute for House Bill  
6434.

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Calendar page 24, Calendar 577, Substitute for  
House Bill 5795.

Calendar page 25, Calendar 581, House Bill  
6354.

Calendar page 26, Calendar 596, Substitute for  
House Bill 6282. Calendar 598, Substitute for House  
Bill 6629.

Calendar page 27, Calendar 600, House Bill  
6314. Calendar 601, Substitute for House Bill 6529.  
Calendar 602, Substitute for House Bill 6438.  
Calendar 604, Substitute for House Bill 6639.

Calendar page 28, Calendar 605, Substitute for  
House Bill 6526. Calendar 608, House Bill 6284.

Calendar page 30, Calendar number 615,  
Substitute for House Bill 6485. Calendar 616,  
Substitute for House Bill 6498.

Calendar page 31, Calendar 619, Substitute for  
House Bill 6634. Calendar 627, Substitute for House  
Bill 6596.

Calendar page 32, Calendar 629, House Bill  
5634. Calendar 630, Substitute for House Bill 6631.  
Calendar 631, Substitute for House Bill 6357.  
Calendar 632, House Bill 6642.

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Calendar page 33, Calendar 634, Substitute for  
House Bill 5431. Calendar 636, Substitute for  
House, correction, House Bill 6100.

Page 34, Calendar 638, Substitute for House  
Bill 6525.

Calendar page 48, Calendar 399, Substitute for  
Senate Bill 1043.

Calendar page 49, Calendar 409, Substitute for  
House Bill 6233. Calendar 412, House Bill 5178.  
Calendar 422, Substitute for House Bill 6448.

Calendar page 52, Calendar 521, Substitute for  
House Bill 6113.

Madam President, that completes the item placed  
on the first Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir.

We call for another roll call vote. And the  
machine will be open for Consent Calendar number 1.

THE CLERK:

The Senate is now voting by roll on the Consent  
Calendar. Will all Senators please return to the  
Chamber. The Senate is now voting by roll on the  
Consent Calendar, will all Senators please return to  
the Chamber.

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Senator Cassano, would you vote, please, sir.

Thank you.

Well, all members have voted. All members have voted. The machine will be closed, and Mr. Clerk, will you call the tally?

THE CLERK:

Motion is on option Consent Calendar Number 1.

Total Number Voting	36
Those voting Yea	36
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	0

THE CHAIR:

Consent Calendar Number 1 has passed.

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

We might stand at ease for just a moment as we prepare the next item..

THE CHAIR:

The Senate will stand at ease.

(Chamber at ease.)