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indicated that you were shocked by -- that the committee would raise such a bill and interpret that as placing zero value on what you spend to market Connecticut. And we certainly don't want you to feel that way.

The purpose of a public hearing is to throw out an idea to get people who have knowledge about that issue to come forward and testify, as you are doing today. So it's certainly not out of any disrespect for what you do for Connecticut. It's simply to flesh out this issue and try to understand and make sure that there's fairness in our tax policy.

So I just wanted to reassure you that we still love you.

CHRIS SODER: Well, thank you for that and I appreciate the opportunity to at least --

REP. WIDLITZ: Okay. Thank you.

And Happy Birthday.

Okay. Next we have Kathy Eagen followed by Comptroller Kevin Lembo.

KATHY EAGEN: Good afternoon. I'm Kathy Eagen, the Town Manager of the Town of Farmington and I'm here today to talk about H.B. 5424, AN ACT CONCERNING THE DELAY IN REEVALUATION IN CERTAIN TOWNS.

The Town of Farmington supports H.B. 5424, AN ACT CONCERNING THE DELAY IN REEVALUATION FOR CERTAIN TOWNS. And we request that the committee vote to send it to the House. The bill would give the Town of Farmington as well as any municipality required to implement a reevaluation as of October 1, 2012, assessment year, the option to defer it for one year.

The Town of Farmington is presently conducting a reevaluation of all real property. Our current projections show that a substantial shift between commercial and residential value may occur with both sides declining in value, but commercial value is declining more.

Overall this decline in value could result on average a 9 percent tax increase for residential property owners and more for our businesses. The Town would like the ability to defer the implementation for one year so that we would have the opportunity to see if the overall market conditions improve, thus lessening the shift which would help reduce the tax impact on both our business and residents.

Recent data supports this request and has shown that communities that are implementing a reevaluation are experiencing a significant tax impact in both residential property owners and businesses at a time when they can least afford the increases.

As you know, the real estate economy is lagging behind the overall improvements we have begun to see in the economy. The Town of Farmington is hopeful that by deferring the implementation of reevaluation for one year we will see improvements in the real estate market. The Town appreciates -- the Town of Farmington appreciates you considering our request.

REP. WIDLITZ: Thank you for your testimony.

Are there any questions?

Representative Aman followed by Representative Chapin.

REP. AMAN: Yes. Thank you for coming in.

This reevaluation problem continually comes up. Yours is a little different. It's my understanding you have finished your evaluation so you know the value of all the properties in town versus the other towns over the years -- or just wanted to delay the whole assessment process.

KATHY EAGEN: We are in the process of doing it now.

REP. AMAN: So you would be finished for the tax bills a year from this July.

KATHY EAGEN: Yes.

REP. AMAN: Why do you want us to defer it versus using the phase in that you're already allowed to be able to use?

KATHY EAGEN: Because first of all, we'd like this -- we want to, first of all, look at the data and determine if we want to -- what we want to do. Whether we want to phase it in or we want to defer it for the following year.

In the past we have not really wanted to phase it in because we see the data shows that in the next couple of years outward the tax increase is much higher and we'd rather -- in Farmington our policy decision has been to do it in one year and just take the burden in one year instead of having high taxes for numerous years. So that's what our policy direction has been.

Right now we just want to just defer it for one year or at least look at, see what data says, hope that the economy will get better and that the shift won't be as great. And that's our position.

REP. AMAN: Okay. Wouldn't -- Would a one-year phase in on your part accomplish the same thing?

KATHY EAGEN: Well, I think two years would probably be better, but I think --

REP. AMAN: No. Instead of a delay of it for a year by state statute --

KATHY EAGEN: Yeah.

REP. AMAN: -- under state statute, it's my understanding now you can phase in anywhere from one to three years or five years. I can't remember which it is.

KATHY EAGEN: Right. Yeah.

REP. AMAN: So if you picked a one-year phase in, wouldn't that have the same impact as delaying the --

KATHY EAGEN: I don't think so. Again, our policy direction has been not to do the phase in because we'd rather just do it all at once and not continue to have that number and phase it over numerous years. We'd just like to just do it in one year, implement it all at once.

And so again, in our history here in Farmington that's how we've done the reevaluation and it has worked for us. And that's what we're requesting, just one year deferred -- deferment.

REP. AMAN: And just to be sure that I understand, this would affect the tax bills your residents receive in June of 2013.

KATHY EAGEN: That's if we got the deferral.

REP. AMAN: If you got the deferral.

KATHY EAGEN: Yes.

REP. AMAN: Okay. Thank you.

KATHY EAGEN: Thank you.

REP. WIDLITZ: Thank you.

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

So it sounds like you'd like this legislation to pass with -- as you hold your breath productively and Farmington hoping that the economy turns around and things get better.

Suppose it doesn't and that the data is even worse. Would you be back next year asking for another enactment?

KATHY EAGEN: I think realistically, yes. I think that would be true. But again at this point in time we are -- we have seen some trends that things are improving and that Farmington has had a history that we do do the reevaluation. We do it over one year.

That eventually we're not even determined -- sure that we're going to actually defer it. We have to look at the data and that's one of the things that I think that this helps us, is that we can analyze all the data that's coming out and we're going to try to make a determination whether it would be in our best interests to do it now or to defer it a year later.

REP. CHAPIN: Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. WIDLITZ: Thank you.

Representative Megna.

REP. MEGNA: Thank you, Madam Chair.

What percent -- have you noticed a change or is there a decline in commercial properties and an increase in residential properties?

KATHY EAGEN: In Farmington the residential is declining less. The commercial is declining much more. Our residential has been holding steady, but I think in different communities it's different. But in Farmington our residential has been doing pretty well, but the commercial has really seen a decrease.

REP. CHAPIN: And decline.

KATHY EAGEN: Yes.

REP. CHAPIN: And of your commercial, would you know how many tenant-occupied units that you have in Farmington?

KATHY EAGEN: I don't know that off the top of my head.

REP. CHAPIN: Okay. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. WIDLITZ: Representative Altobello.

REP. ALTOBELLO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

So you haven't finished your evaluation yet.

KATHY EAGEN: No. We're in the process of doing it right now.

REP. ALTOBELLO: But you may think it be unfavorable due to some statistics that you have, maybe a statistical update or something.

KATHY EAGEN: The data we're receiving right now we're in the process of it, because if we don't get this -- if it doesn't get a deferment we're going to have to implement it.

So we're in the process of doing it right now and the data that we have been receiving has -- showing that there is a substantial decrease in commercial properties and that's what we're worried about. So we're hoping to get another year to see some of the businesses, their value come up again.

REP. ALTOBELLO: Okay. And what's the shift again, your projected shift?

KATHY EAGEN: Well, we're showing right now that probably for the average resident, it's about a 9 percent tax increase. And so that's what we're seeing right now. And that's -- and it will be more for the businesses because of the shift.

So what's going to happen is that the tax rate, the businesses are coming down. The burden is going to shift more to the residential, and thus their tax rate going up. So we're trying to again -- hopefully that with the overall economy improving in especially the real estate market, that shift won't be as great and we won't have to burden on taxpayers as much.

REP. ALTOBELLO: And what do you -- if we allow you to delay, what numbers are you going to use for the year after?

KATHY EAGEN: I guess what you do is that we use our numbers now and you go out and you do another -- you spend some money and have the numbers updated and then you use those numbers. That's --

REP. ALTOBELLO: So you want to do a statistical update on the numbers you finally received for what you should be doing now.

KATHY EAGEN: I'm not sure if it's a full statistical update, but it is something, a process that we have to follow that we would get our numbers updated. We would pay for that and have our numbers updated for the following year.

REP. ALTOBELLO: So you want to defer this and then do a mini update.

KATHY EAGEN: Yeah. I guess that would be --

REP. ALTOBELLO: How much do you think you're going to spend on this mini update?

KATHY EAGEN: Well, presently right now we're spending close to $500,000 on the reevaluation, which is a whole another story. But we are hoping that it would be much, much less than that for, you know, less than 50 or 60 thousand dollars to have them come through and do an update for us.

REP. ALTOBELLO: And you're hoping that something other than residential properties would bear a larger percentage of your grant list going forward.

KATHY EAGEN: We're hoping in Farmington we have a large commercial base. We're hoping that that commercial base is going to go up and also we hope that our residential base is going to go up. We've been doing pretty well with the residential assessments, but they still have declined somewhat.

We're hoping that with the economy and the real estate market improving everything would go up which would then be a benefit to the Town of Farmington.

REP. ALTOBELLO: But if everything goes up the same amount, everybody pays the same amount of taxes.

KATHY EAGEN: We're hoping that the burden on the commercial side is the higher side that goes up.

REP. ALTOBELLO: Thank you very much.

REP. WIDLITZ: Thank you.

Represent -- Senator Leone.

REP. LEONE: I get that a lot these days. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Just a quick question as I listened to the debate. You mentioned that if you do nothing you're anticipating a 9 percent increase on the residential homeowners.

KATHY EAGEN: That's what our data showing right now on average.

REP. LEONE: So if we were to allow the delay, what do you anticipate the reduction in the percentage to the homeowners would be?

KATHY EAGEN: Again if we choose to do it, again we haven't determined if that is what we're going to do. We're hoping that it's going to be less than that.

In the past we've had different averages where it's gone from, I think our last one was about a 6 percent or -- and then around a 3 percent, but it's all on -- based on averages. Again the reevaluation is a difficult time. And especially really with this economy and any type of increases like this it's very, very difficult.

REP. LEONE: So what I'm hearing is as small as a 3 percent decrease. So instead of a 9 percent they would get -- they would see a 6 percent increase.

KATHY EAGEN: Yeah. I think that it's going to be realistic that you're going to still see an increase with the reevaluation, but we're hoping that it's going to be less than. At this point of time anything is better because people are, as you know, really struggling on any type of taxes. And plus, our budgets are going up in general. So that compounds it.

So again, we're just looking to be able to analyze our data and give ourselves another year to analyze it and hope that things get better and then it won't be as high as 9 percent.

REP. LEONE: And what's the ratio between the commercial and the residential in terms of the totals?

KATHY EAGEN: We're 26 percent commercial.

REP. LEONE: Okay. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. WIDLITZ: Thank you.

Any other questions?

Thank you very much for your testimony.

KATHY EAGEN: Thank you.

REP. WIDLITZ: Comptroller Lembo cannot be with us today, so we'll go onto James White followed by Joan Paskewich. James White?

Okay. We'll move on to Joan Paskewich.

JOAN PASKEWICH: Thank you for the opportunity to appear before your committee today. I'm here at the request of our town manager Neal Beets. My name is Joan Paskewich and I've been the assessor for the Town of Windham for about 20 years for a total of 35 years in the assessment profession.

I was a member of two committees with the property tax reform commission way back in 1995. And at that time I advocated for the increased frequency of reevaluations from ten years to five years. And I'm going to appear to take a turn around in addressing House Bill Number 5424 in that respect.

I've never pictured myself before you today to request a reevaluation deferral. In fact, the Town of Windham performed a reevaluation in 2005, a year earlier than required by statute following the 2001 reevaluation.

At that time the real estate market was healthy. Arm's-length sales were plentiful and I had confidence as assessor that we could produce fair and equitable values that were defensible in court and to the taxpayers.

Current declining real estate market conditions are historical and unprecedented. To conduct a reevaluation in the Town of Windham at this time, which is a Connecticut designated distressed municipality, could have some dire results.

Our service district encompasses our struggling downtown and an abundance of tax-exempt properties including Eastern Connecticut State University and Windham hospital. It also carries the fourth highest mill rate in the State of Connecticut. Real estate values have decreased here significantly since the 2005 reevaluation which would result in even higher mill rates at current spending levels.

Although we achieved what I thought was a quite remarkable 1 percent increase in our grand list last year, higher than the surrounding towns as a matter of fact, it took us three budget referendums to pass the budget. Trying to pass the budget starting with a conservative 10 to 20 percent drop in real estate values, which would be equivalent to say a 3 mill increase before the budget proceedings even begin, would be a virtual bloodbath in our town.

There are a significant number of large and complex commercial properties on our grant list. Increased mill rates will seriously impact their business personal property tax bills, which are assessed annually, not on the reevaluation cycle.

Our town struggles under current circumstances to attract and keep businesses. This would be a potential kiss of death to our businesses, the very opposite of desperately needed economic development. There are an extraordinary number of foreclosures and short sales in our inventory with a corresponding decrease in fair market value or arm's-length transactions. This makes it extremely difficult to establish defensible values that are also credible to the public.

The purpose of a reevaluation is to correct inequities in assessments in a fair and equitable manner. The Town of Windham at this time does not have enough reliable data to assure this result. I also fear that we could not satisfy the numerous requirements of state-mandated reevaluation performance-based standards.

We have only one tax appeal remaining from the 2005 reevaluation. Performing a reevaluation under current circumstances opens the floodgate to new appeals. We've tracked other towns whose grant lists have declined recently following their reevaluations and they have continued to have a grant list decline even after the year of reevaluation. The financial impact is also realized from increased legal and appraisal fees. This jeopardizes stability in future grand lists and the ability to rely on budgeted tax revenues.

In closing, the Town of Windham does not minimize the importance of reevaluations. In fact, we have conducted two reevaluations in five -- in four years, 2001 and 2005. If we defer, say, until 2013 we will have averaged one reevaluation every 4.3 years as compared to five years.

Thank you for the opportunity to endorse this important bill. I would be happy to address any questions now or in the future.

REP. WIDLITZ: Thank you very much for your testimony.

Representative Johnson.

REP. JOHNSON: Hi. And thank you for being here today. I really appreciate your coming and providing testimony.

I just wanted to follow up on some of the information that you provided to me in the past and that is that there had been a lot of litigation in towns where the mill rates had gone down and it had an adverse impact on business. Could you give us some of that information?

JOAN PASKEWICH: For example, there's a representative from the town of Norwich with us today. Following their 2008 reevaluation their grand list declined by over a $14 million assessment the following year. Whenever there's a decline there's a -- excuse me -- a corresponding increase in mill rates, all other budget issues being equal.

Because personal property, business personal property; furniture, fixtures, machinery and equipment, are valued annually, they bear -- just like motor vehicles -- they bear the changes of those increased mill rates the highest because they are at current levels.

And again, it's difficult to have one of the highest mill rates in the state of Connecticut and try to attract other businesses to our town as it is. And to increase that liability would be devastating to the Town of Windham.

REP. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you so much for being here.

REP. WIDLITZ: Thank you.

Representative Altobello.

REP. ALTOBELLO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Howdy.

What sort of shift would you anticipate, given a level spending plan? And I know in the real world that doesn't happen that often. What kind of shift would you -- are you projecting to the commercial properties?

JOAN PASKEWICH: In the Town of Windham I find that very difficult to estimate almost without performing a full reevaluation because we're not a homogeneous type of community. We don't have some divisions of cookie-cutter neighborhoods. We have multi-families. We have Victorians and mobile home parks and all types of properties.

Some -- it's difficult to even realize which sales are not a short sale or a bank sale. Some commercial properties seem to be holding their own more than residential. I think in the town of Windham where we have a poor community, I think maybe the impact of the real estate with fraudulent financing, et cetera, on some who were less informed. I think that we may feel that more than others. We probably have about 30 percent of our sales which are foreclosure or stress sales.

REP. ALTOBELLO: I understand that your data may not be too good on the short sales and the foreclosure sales, but I don't understand if you're grand list goes down and your mill rate has to go up, but there's no shift, I mean, there's no harm and there's no foul.

The only harm and foul in delaying is to delay the people who pay their motor vehicle bills and their property, personal property taxes because they will definitely pay more than other people.

JOAN PASKEWICH: Yes. They --

REP. ALTOBELLO: A small amount.

JOAN PASKEWICH: They, under these economic conditions, they would not see decreases in their bills at all. So that would be virtually every taxpayer in the town of Windham. That would be every owner of a motor vehicle and over a thousand business personal property accounts as well.

And that really is a hard economic development point for us because the town desperately needs that type of development and we know that that only would be -- we would be unattractive, but we would have trouble retaining the business that we already have under that scenario.

And because I'm speaking from a distressed municipality's standpoint, having such a high mill rate to begin with, knowing the history of not passing budgets, extending that rate higher, I think it's perceptual. It's a big perceptual problem as well for the taxpayers of the town of Windham.

Our entire board of -- our town council, finance administration committee, et cetera, are in unanimous support of my request to you. They understand and they, between you and I, are dreading any kind of attempt to pass a budget under this scenario. We are -- our budgets are very, very slim already and a lot of it is perception.

REP. ALTOBELLO: If you were following the previous speakers, the woman from the Town of Farmington, under her scenario businesses, to delay would cost businesses to pay more.

And under your scenario you don't know what the shift is, but being -- all things being equal, wouldn't a delay mean businesses would pay more?

JOAN PASKEWICH: Hopefully it would level-ize more and the burden wouldn't be extremely shifted to either side. We do know absolutely sure that the burden will switch to the business personal property owner, beyond a doubt. We know that it will shift to the motor vehicle taxpayer for sure.

And what happens within the other categories and neighborhoods and sub neighborhoods in town --

REP. ALTOBELLO: Who knows.

JOAN PASKEWICH: -- remains to be seen.

But I do worry that -- how do I defend these values? How do I convince the taxpayers in town where one property sells for 2 hundred thousand dollars as an arm's-length transaction and another sells for a hundred on a distressed sale and another similar sells for 85? And where is the value? And I can probably explain to you and you will understand, but most taxpayers in my town won't understand.

And if I don't have the data for our commercial properties -- and we have several large and unique properties -- if I don't feel confident in those values and then am challenged in a tax appeal, the Town could pay a dear price for that.

REP. ALTOBELLO: So just to -- thank you.

Just to finish up here, you don't have any projections in shifts.

JOAN PASKEWICH: If I did it would be general in the overall list. And if I used -- and it is not an accurate method of establishing a sales assessment ratio, but we do have to make reports to OPM on an annual basis where they put everything together. It's all residential ratio and then it's all commercial ratio and it really isn't stratified as it should be.

If I used OPM's, there would be some shift if these sales are even proper sales to the commercial sector, I don't trust that ratio, by the way, but that's what it says right now.

REP. ALTOBELLO: What does it say?

JOAN PASKEWICH: It says that the -- this is how I (inaudible).

It says that the commercial values are nearly the same as our 2005 values. And I don't -- and I have contested OPM's methodology in writing for years because they use -- they don't time adjust for sales. They don't adjust for special financing.

REP. ALTOBELLO: Okay. The data is stale and so forth.

JOAN PASKEWICH: Yeah.

REP. ALTOBELLO: Okay.

JOAN PASKEWICH: But it say that. And it says that there's about a 15 percent decline in residential, but we haven't had the -- well, I hate to -- I'm so reluctant to generalize, because it's one of the most difficult things to perform in a reevaluation.

Because it almost sounds like you would push a button to produce values for each segment. And there's going to be a roller coaster in the commercial properties and in residential, whether you're Victorian or multifamily or a mobile home property.

REP. ALTOBELLO: But without some sort of a projection in the shift, who's going to pay more? I mean, it really doesn't matter if you start out with a grant list of a billion dollars and your mill rate is 50. It doesn't matter if there's no shift if your grand list goes down to half a billion and your mill rate is a hundred. Everybody is still paying the same.

So you're not -- outside of the --

JOAN PASKEWICH: Well, the total revenue created, all other things being equal, would be that way, but there would be thousands of shifts in town, thousands of shifts.

REP. ALTOBELLO: But that happens all the time, every reevaluation.

JOAN PASKEWICH: Right. But it wouldn't affect --

REP. ALTOBELLO: There are winners and losers.

JOAN PASKEWICH: Right. The problem is, first of all, the quality of the data. Secondly, in the town of Windham, a distressed community, the effect on the mill rate would be devastating for economic development reasons, for trying to budget and perception of people wanting to come to town, it would be difficult.

And I don't have a lot of faith in the data that I will have to defend for the Town.

REP. ALTOBELLO: One last question, if I may?

What's your grand list now? And what are you projected to be if you do a full reval? What's your grand list now?

JOAN PASKEWICH: We have two taxing districts. And there, it approaches a total of about a billion dollars.

REP. ALTOBELLO: Okay. And what are you projecting?

JOAN PASKEWICH: It could be a 25 percent decrease overall.

REP. ALTOBELLO: Okay. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. WIDLITZ: Thank you.

Senator Leone.

REP. LEONE: Thank you, Madam Chair.

And just to maybe --

Over here.

Just to capture a little bit of what Representative Altobello was touching upon. Are you -- if we allow this, are you attempting to reduce the pressure on the residential community or more on the commercial community?

JOAN PASKEWICH: I'm not trying to do either of those. I'm trying to preserve the equitable, the fair and equitable reevaluation that we had in 2005 that was very defensible that I can explain and the taxpayer feels that they're treated fairly. I am trying not to taint that with using data that is not reliable and that will result in a higher mill rate that will be very bad for economic development and will raise business personal property taxes, motor vehicle taxes.

And we already started the budget process this year with an anticipated 33 cents per hundred increase and they want to cut the budget dramatically already. I can't imagine if we came in at the same level saying that first we're going to start off with three and half mills more. Let's start the discussion. It would be devastating to the town.

And I have to say as an assessor I rarely talk about mill rates. I leave that up to the, you know, the CEOs and the financial bodies in town. Between you and I, as an assessor, and I have other assessors who are not in distressed municipalities who are in small communities that don't have a commercial mix, and they are heroes because all the values went down and they are getting very little feedback from property owners who are happy that their values went down.

And that could be the same for me because then the hoorah would not be on the assessment. The hoorah would be on the mill rate and the budget makers. And I've been told that, as an assessor, I shouldn't bother myself with that, but I care about the town and I do want to bother with that. And so I'm sticking my neck out here a little bit because I believe it's the best thing for the town.

REP. LEONE: So you're hoping to treat the residential and commercial communities equally. correct?

JOAN PASKEWICH: Yes. Yes, I am.

REP. LEONE: Okay. Which is great, but if you're trying to chase whatever your budget is, the mill rate would then be the only factor that determines how much revenue you would have to raise by virtue of the commercial and residentials paying their portion. That would be the one key indicator in terms of whatever your town budget ends up needing to be.

So you're saying that both your residentials and your commercial have declined. You're trying to delay the reevals so that your mill rate will decrease and will decrease by virtue of the fact that all the property has decreased in value.

JOAN PASKEWICH: Will increase. If the value goes down the (inaudible) goes up.

REP. LEONE: Well, correct. You're right. We'll have to increase to justify the budget. So your -- I'm not sure that the -- a delay in reval should be justified by what the budget ends up being for a specific community.

JOAN PASKEWICH: I'm not saying that either. I'm just saying that the --

REP. LEONE: But that would be net effect because if all property levels have decreased and the mill rate has to go up, the mill rate is going up because of whatever your budget has to be for your town.

JOAN PASKEWICH: Well, no. It's going up because the values have gone down. We have less value to tax.

REP. LEONE: But you need the mill rate to justify the costs and the services you provide as a community.

JOAN PASKEWICH: That's a piece of the formula. Yeah. We need economic development. You know, we need not to be the highest mill rate in town using data that's worse than our last reevaluation.

REP. LEONE: Okay. So just to end the questioning. So the delay, the extra delay for the one year will be beneficial to both commercial and residential.

JOAN PASKEWICH: Yes, to everyone.

REP. LEONE: Okay. Thank you.

Thank you, madam Chair.

REP. WIDLITZ: Representative Aman.

REP. AMAN: I thank you for coming forward. It's not an easy position right now to be a tax assessor trying to explain to people that where your values come from when they're looking at what their looking at what their houses are selling for.

I guess my question ties into I'm looking at real estate values because I'm tied into the industry and for me personally I couldn't wait for home prices to recover since I'm a homebuilder. I don't expect that to happen in the next year.

If I am right, one year, a year from now you'll be sitting here saying, remember what I told you last year? I'm in a worse situation now. I wished you had turned me down last year. Is that pretty close to what could well be happening?

JOAN PASKEWICH: Well in actuality, I am here again. Well, I'm not here, but we received -- actually we received -- we were a 2010 reevaluation on the OPM schedule. There was enabling legislation the following year for all -- for any towns on the local option basis to defer a year, and we did.

And then last year we asked individually to extend it because that was the situation. The reason that we asked for that deferment was because of the situation that we are in now, too. So yes, I agree with what you're saying and I guess I can only say that we're taking it one year at a time.

But one year at a time for two years in a row now has allowed us to have a 1 percent growth in the grand list. It's allowed us, even though it's been three budget referendums, to get a budget passed, to hopefully still encourage some economic development for people to have faith in the process.

And yes, the assessor's office is getting a lot of heat these days because our values are higher than the selling prices, but the cost I think is worth the end result, which would be continuing mill rate increases without any budget increase, which is not healthy for any municipality.

REP. AMAN: Just so that I understand, you've had two postponements now. This would be your third one.

JOAN PASKEWICH: Yes, it was.

REP. AMAN: But if my economic analysis is correct, a year from now you'll be looking for your fourth one.

JOAN PASKEWICH: You can very well be correct from what I've seen as well.

REP. AMAN: And I think the reluctance from the questioning you're hearing from the committee is that we saw what the results were in some of our major cities in delaying reevaluation and the pain that has to pass. As a former a mayor I understand the pain very well of trying to explain to people that my budget went down but their tax bill went up. And then them saying no, that can't possibly be true. But it is and is a reality of it.

So I think that's what you're hearing the reluctance on this committee about, is looking at what happened to some of our major cities when reevaluation was continually delayed for years. And the mill rate and the assessments and the business versus the private, and then when we tried to straighten it out, the nightmare really grew for people when all of the sudden you said, you're going to have a hundred percent increase in your property taxes on your home or on your business.

So thank you for coming forward. We'll be looking at this and the other towns in trying to come up with something that may or may not help you.

JOAN PASKEWICH: Yeah. Could I just respond quickly to that?

I came to the Town of Windham in 1992 and they had not performed a reevaluation in 15 years. We finally implemented it in 1993 and one of the reasons, like with the town of Waterbury, when you go that long and your mill rates are that high and of course, there's all kinds of sticker shock and problems with that and --

but of course, when the economy is improving, that means that the mill rates come down. That's why I'm talking so much from a real -- a mill rate prospective.

We had a reevaluation and again, like I said, in 2001 and then again in 2005, just four years later. You know, we believe in the validity of reevaluation for the purpose of them, but not if they're going to decrease or diminish the statistical accuracy -- is that another way to say it? The equity of the process. It's self-defeating I think.

And if we can, you know, if the market starts to improve and we can see things smoothing out, then that's the time to implement. But right now and again, as I said in 2003 or 2013 or 2014, we still would have done three reevaluations in 15 years, five years apiece. We're not trying to drag this out truly. This is an unprecedented economy.

And I feel badly. I am -- I was a national instructor. I went across the country telling people the importance of reevaluation and the importance of their frequency. And it sounds like I am contradicting myself, but in these economic times I don't believe I am.

REP. AMAN: You mentioned the possibility of a variety of lawsuits because of the evaluation. Have you had anyone come in -- and this is probably a general question for you, just knowing the assessment people across the state -- on the opposite part saying, you've delayed reevaluation for three years in a row. My fill-in-the-blank property, if it had been reevaluated as it should have three years ago was worth 50 percent less than what I -- what you're carrying it on the books for.

So I'm bringing suit against you for delaying and costing me a certain amount of money, which is 180-degree reversal in the suit that you're talking about, but the Town would still be forced into the position of defending itself.

Are you aware of that type of suit either in your town or in any other town?

JOAN PASKEWICH: I thought I heard of something in Waterbury, but I think the circumstances are a little bit different. I have not been faced with that.

I don't know how -- because you have an effective date of reevaluation, how you could establish what that difference would have been if you had conducted it three years ago. I think maybe you would have had to either have completed a reval and not implemented it in order for you to know that you were overpaying or underpaying or whatever and we haven't reached that place yet.

REP. AMAN: Okay. Thank you again for coming forward.

REP. WIDLITZ: Thank you very much for your testimony. Best of luck to you.

JOAN PASKEWICH: Thank you.

REP. WIDLITZ: The next person signed up is Senator Martin Looney. He's not here.

We will move onto Anthony Dignoti followed by Tim Phelan and Howard Rifkin.

SENATOR DAILY: I think we should note, though, that we do have Senator Looney's written testimony available for each member to read.

ANTHONY DIGNOTI: Good afternoon, Senator Daily, Representative Widlitz, committee members. My name is Anthony Dignoti. I am the president of the Connecticut Fire Department Instructors' Association. I'm here today to speak on Senate Bill 25.

afternoon.

My name is Donna Ralston. I am the new assessor for the City of Norwich. I do have a 31 -- career as an assessor within the state of Connecticut. I am here on behalf of the City Manager Alan Bergren to speak in favor of House Bill 5424, in which the City is requesting a delay of the statutorily required reevaluation it will require to implement by 10/1/13.

I could pretty much just sit here and say, ditto to the testimony that was given by the assessor of Windham, as well as to her answers. However Norwich has its own unique problems. We are a distressed municipality, a beautiful distressed municipality, but we are struggling to revitalize an attract new business. Our downtown is virtually empty. I know you don't know that because most people who drive through Norwich are going to the casino and they go around and they don't see that our downtown is empty.

I cannot even project what the decrease or increase would be of value at this time or what the shift would be, but I do know this, the majority of the sales occurring in the city are foreclosures and short sales. Sales prices are all over the place. Fair market value would be difficult if not impossible to determine, explain and defend to the taxpayer, or to anyone for that matter.

The cost to the City was over half a million dollars for the last revaluation. It was an unfunded -- it is an unfunded mandate that we -- to an already very fragile budget. We haven't even gone out to bid for a revaluation. And if we did, signing a contract would require that we put money up or a bond immediately.

As the bill is currently written, the date in Section 1 would not give Norwich any relief at all. We respectfully request the date in the section be changed to October 1, 2014. And another reason for that request is this, the City of Norwich data is an absolute disaster. I got there two years ago and I've been trying to spend my time to clean up the data.

And it is true, what they say, garbage in means garbage out. And if we do a revaluation with the data that we currently have, we would not get any equity at all. Therefore on behalf of the City of Norwich I respectfully request that you consider passage of this House Bill and give us the necessary time to experience arm's-length usable sales needed to provide the taxpayers with good, solid values that would create the equity and uniformity that they all deserve.

Thank you.

REP. WIDLITZ: Thank you for your testimony.

Are there questions?

Representative Moukawsher.

REP. MOUKAWSHER: Thank you.

I had looked at your written submission earlier and what you're saying kind of echoes it. But -- and I've listened to the other proponents of this measure. And I think what you're saying, more so than the others, is that the real estate market is in such a state of flux that getting an accurate revaluation is, I'm not going to say impossible, but it's going to be very difficult.

And that if there were -- if you had additional time before having to do this revaluation, the market would be in some -- a more comprehensible state. In other words, you'd be able to -- hopefully the market would come back enough where you would have reliable values, but right now it just doesn't seem like you can make any kind of reliable revaluation. And any such revaluation would probably be subject to a lot of challenges that of course would cost the City of Norwich a lot of money as well. Is that right?

DONNA RALSTON: Yes, it is accurate. Yes.

The one thing I neglected to ask for I think is that the way the bill is written right now, the date in Section 1 wouldn't give us any relief. Did I say that? We need it to be changed to October 1, 2014. We're already doing 2013. We would have to be starting that revaluation now in order for it to be effective October 1, '13.

And yeah. I mean, I've defended countless reevaluations in the 31 years that I've been there. And taxpayers, if you can explain it so that they can understand it they don't mind. They just want to pay their fair share. And if you can't even defend the values that you come up with because there aren't any sales, how are you going to explain it? It would be very difficult for me to do that across the counter.

REP. MOUKAWSHER: All right. So you'd be spending upwards of $500,000 to do what you considered to be a --

DONNA RALSTON: More.

REP. MOUKAWSHER: -- not very reliable set of information.

DONNA RALSTON: We paid $587,000 in 2008. I'm sure it hasn't gone down.

REP. MOUKAWSHER: Yeah. All right. Thank you. That's what my understanding was.

DONNA RALSTON: You're welcome.

REP. WIDLITZ: Thank you for your testimony.

DONNA RALSTON: You're welcome.

REP. WIDLITZ: Mag Morelli followed by Ted Schroll and Karen Schuessler. Schuessler.

Sorry for mangling that.

MAG MORELLI: Thank you, Representative Widlitz, members of the committee. My name is Mag Morelli and I'm the President of Leading Age Connecticut, a membership organization representing over 130 mission-driven and not-for-profit provider organization serving older adults across the continuum of long-term-care, including housing for the elderly, home care and skilled nursing facilities. Leading Age Connecticut was formally called Connecticut Association for Not-for-profit Providers for the Aging or CANPFA.

On behalf of Leading Age Connecticut, I'd like to testify in support of Senate Bill 25 and specifically in support of both the Governor's commitment to housing development, including the expansion of congregate elderly housing, and the proposal to assist in modernizing, restructuring, diversifying and/or downsizing existing nursing homes as part of the State's longterm care right-sizing effort.

There's a growing demand for affordable senior housing units across the state as is demonstrated by the lengthy waiting lists being maintained by our 24 elderly housing site members. The waiting lists are reflective of the success our state's nationally praised model -- providing affordable community-based services to congregate and elderly housing residents, which has allowed older adults to age in place and remain in their affordable housing units.

Unfortunately the shortage of available units

REP. WIDLITZ: Rebecca.

Rebecca, how do you pronounce your last name?

REBECCA BOMBERO: Bombero.

REP. WIDLITZ: Bomber. I was right the first time. Thank you.

REBECCA BOMBERO: You had it right the first time.

Senator Daily, Representative Widlitz, members of the Finance Committee, thank you very much for the opportunity to come and comment on H.B. 5424 and the revaluation process. The City of New Haven understands the concerns of many of the municipalities that have been before you today, having just completed our revaluation process.

I have submitted written testimony to you, so I will highlight this main points of this. In 2011 the City conducted a new revaluation. That was after our last revaluation of 2006 which occurred at the height of the market. We had come to you in 2009 after the to request a timeout on our phase-in freeze, because what we were witnessing was that to be valued at the height of the market were no longer holding true in sales data. So the values of the second year of phase in were more close to the fair-market sales prices that were occurring at that time.

So in 2011 we got to the next phase in. What we witnessed was a valuation of an extremely volatile market. We have extremely low commercial vacancy rates so our commercial values continue to grow.

The residential market was very different. Over half the property owners saw their property values decrease from the frozen 2010 values. Take my home for instance. The 2006 assessment was $230,000. The 2010 phased-in assessment was 168,000. The new 20011 value is 165,000.

Over 11,244 properties saw such decreases ranging from small like mine to up to 10, 25 or 50 percent. The remaining 9,457 residential properties saw increases. While some of these increases were very small, between the 2010 frozen value and the 2006 full value many properties had continued to appreciate despite the craziness of the residential market and saw increases of 30, 40, 50 and up to and over a hundred percent from the 2010 frozen values.

After completion of the initial values, the mayor held a series of eight community meetings where he met with property owners throughout the city. People were concerned and many were scared, people who were already struggling and afraid they would no longer be able to afford their homes.

Some argue that those who paid the 600,000 or the 2 million for their homes can afford the increases. This may be fair, but you worry about the widow next door who has lived in the home for 20 years who paid 60,000 when both she and her husband were working, who raised a family there and now is on the fixed income. They may live in a $600,000 home, but they are asset rich and cash poor. Or what about the teacher and the firefighter who bought the home on Orange Street for $150,000 ten years ago and now have a $400,000 property?

Over the course of the winter the mayor met with members of our board of aldermen and we talked about the different scenarios. We could ask not to implement, but what about the 11,244 people whose properties went down? What about the $2 million the City just spent on revaluation? We could fully implement, but what about that little widow? What about the couple on Orange Street? Or better yet, what about Chatham Square, a neighborhood that ten years ago had numerous boarded-up homes and where homeownership is on the rise, where a large tax increases could destabilize the neighborhood?

So I'll just fast-forward. The solution, while there is no silver bullet, what the City is contemplating would be a homeowner phase in where we would phase in values just for homeowner-occupied properties. This would solve the one problem we see at a minimal effect to the rest of the properties in the city.

It would require just a 4 percent increase in the possible low mill rates. Because we did see an overall growth in the grand list, so instead of dropping from forty-three ninety to thirty-eight ninety-six, the mill rate would only drop to forty fifty-six.

And my testimony outlines all of this for you. There's additional information available on the City's website. And with respecting your time I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

REP. WIDLITZ: Thank you for your testimony.

Could you clarify for me please the difference now between what you're talking about for the residential, that would be a phase in, and what happens to the commercial properties under your proposal?

REBECCA BOMBERO: So just a great overview of the revaluation. In general, residential property on average grew slightly. Commercial property grew slightly more. So that enabled us to lower the mill rate from forty-three ninety down to thirty-eight ninety-six.

What this proposal would do is limit the phase in to just owner-occupied residential structures and therefore cost the lowest amount possible in terms of redistribution of the taxes and require a mill rate of forty fifty-six, about 1.6 mills or about 160 dollars per hundred thousand dollars of value.

Commercials, it would depend on the mix of the commercial property owner. In terms of real property, the building and the personal property that they have. Because personal property is seeing a drastic decrease due to the reduction in the mill rate. The blend of commercials, of personal property and real property would determine what effect they saw in their tax bill.

REP. WIDLITZ: Okay. Thank you.

Are there questions?

Thank you for your testimony.

Next is Representative Jason Perillo followed by Jeff Sonestein and Hilary Teed.

REP. PERILLO: Senator Daily, Representative Widlitz, Representative Williams, I really do appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of Raised Bill 5423, AN ACT CONCERNING OVERSIGHT OF LARGE CAPITAL PROJECTS.

Overall the intent of the bill is twofold. First, we want to give legislators the information and analysis needed to make good decisions when it comes to voting on large-scale high-dollar capital projects. Second, we believe that these kinds of projects should be subject to greater scrutiny throughout the legislative process.

Too often we as legislators are expected to vote on projects that will cost taxpayers tens or even hundreds of millions of dollars with very little detail about the particular project. At times the authorization to begin the project is minimized to a one to two-sentence description in a very large bill among many other projects and provisions. For

REP. WIDLITZ: Aren't you glad you waited all day to give that testimony?

MICHAEL PAVIA: Thank you.

With me today, seated just behind me is the Assessor for the City of Stamford, Francis Kirwin. And to his left is the Acting Director of Administration, Peter Privitera.

Representative Widlitz and distinguished members of the Finance Revenue and Bonding Committee, my name is Michael Pavia and I'm the mayor of the City of Stamford. And I'm here today to respectfully urge your support for Bill 5424, which would allow the postponement of revaluation in the City of Stamford and several other municipalities in Connecticut.

As mayor of the City of Stamford I am keenly aware of the financial hardships that many of the city residents and business owners face. The negative impact of the economic recession has resulted in an apprehension and uncertainty into the lives of many of our citizens.

As mayor, I'm very proud to have a very diverse property base. That has not been spared however from the national recession affecting Stamford economy and other sectors of our real estate market. Property values have declined to levels not seen in over five years and millions, perhaps billions of dollars in equity have been erased from the real estate market. Rental rates have decreased and vacancy rates are on the rise. Foreclosures are at unprecedented levels and continue to threaten more homeowners as they struggle to keep their homes and maintain their investments.

Across the entire country citizens are voicing their concerns over increasing taxes and decreasing property values, and as a result there is a renewed effort to curb excessive and unnecessary spending in municipal government and that's the challenge that I as mayor and other mayors and selectmen throughout the state of Connecticut face regularly.

Locally Stamford is beginning to see early signs of a recovery. New office buildings and apartment buildings are being developed in our south end and parts of the downtown. We're witnessing some stabilization -- and that's a key word, some "stabilization" in commercial rentals as well. Many retail stores and restaurants in Stamford's central business district are reporting a modest improvement in their business, yet serious challenges still remain.

Some experts believe that we are in the initial stages of a 12 to 24-month stabilization period in lower Fairfield County. Typically such periods are accompanied by sluggish and unsteady real estate sales and leasing activity. Restoring confidence among buyers, sellers, tenants, landlords and leaders can be a stubborn and frustratingly slow process.

Faced with the current market conditions and with the reality that stabilization is in its infancy, I'm convinced that Stamford has a legitimate need to postpone its 2012 revaluation. City experts along with other local professionals have reported that values for commercial and industrial properties have fun at higher rates than those of residential properties since our last revaluation.

As such a revaluation in 2012 would be statistically skewed, in my opinion, and would adversely impact residents and small-business owners in Stamford with residential property values on firmer footing than those of commercial and industrial properties. Stamford would likely witness a shift in the property tax burden and such a shift would affect homeowners.

I am of the firm belief that it's wise to postpone our upcoming revaluation to October, 2013 --

Is that my limit?

REP. WIDLITZ: You're near the end of your testimony. You may continue. Thank you.

MICHAEL PAVIA: Thank you very much. I'll paraphrase it and be brief.

While Stamford's situation may be different from other municipalities, what I and other mayors have in common is that we have the best grasp of the property market and the impact that revaluations will have across the sector.

By postponing this year's revaluation you would be allowing us less flexibility in setting the tax base of each of our cities, which is a very critical tool for any mayor. And therefore I am requesting your support for the passage of Bill 5424.

And I am happy to answer any questions you may have. And if I can't, I believe I have the people with me that would. Thank you.

REP. WIDLITZ: Thank you very much for your testimony.

Senator Frantz has a question.

SENATOR FRANTZ: Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate it.

Welcome, Mr. Mayor and Francis and Peter. On days like today with these monstruous hearings, the 90-minute drive up here is the good news. Oftentimes you can wait multiples of that to get in and be heard on such an important subject.

And I'm only sorry that the entire committee is not here. Everybody has other obligations on other committees.

But to get right down to the issue, while I do understand the implications for public policy of stretching out revaluations for too long a period, I think given what city this is within the state of Connecticut and what's going on down there, it's a completely unique situation as far as any municipality in the entire state of Connecticut is concerned.

Because of the economic development activity and just the plain real estate activity down there, it's kind of our Las Vegas going back a few years in terms of what Las Vegas meant to the country. It's the Las Vegas of Connecticut. The growth is quite stunning and there's no question that what it does for the revenues of the State of Connecticut is quite substantial and needs to be ushered through a very difficult period of time here.

And this revaluation needs to be done properly. I completely understand that displacement in the marketplace down there with the real estate marketplace. And I tend to agree with you, that it really should be delayed by at least a year so that those values can come back into -- demonstrably come back into line with reality.

I mean, even you know, these days with market volatility over the last 24 months, even people like Warren Buffett of all people were saying, hold on a second. As we mark our positions to market at the end of the year to show you what a real balance sheet looks like, you have to understand that the intrinsic value of Coca-Cola and 17 other marketed market positions is substantially more than what the market says it is worth. And that's only fair.

And I see that as an analogy to your situation in Stamford. And I do understand the discrepancy is starting to come back, which is good and hopefully the economists are right, that the ones you were just pointing out about the stabilization path that we're on. I think it bears pointing out again that this is a Nero -- a zero effect on state revenues to affect some sort of a revaluation of some sort. It doesn't affect state revenues at all.

And so my question to you, Mr. Mayor is, is a year going to be enough? And the reason why I ask the question is that I think it probably is not great public policy to postpone three, four and five years for any given town or municipality. But will a year do it do you think, Mr. Mayor?

MICHAEL PAVIA: I strongly believe that it would and let me explain my reasoning. I think that what we're looking at is we're looking at a snap shot in time and recessions don't occur within a matter of weeks or months. When they do, unfortunately like the one we're in, it's often prolonged. You study and you look at it and you try to find opportunities that exist.

What I think and believe very strongly is rather than taking and being restricted to a period of time that's set in place, if we had an additional 12 months to make an intelligent decision whether or not to pull the trigger on reval at that moment in time, we're heading into a time where things are starting to look good in terms of the arrows are beginning to point in the right directions.

So the bottom line here is to keep the balance equitable, where it is now. And I think we can achieve that if we had an additional 12 months to make the decision and move forward in that regard.

SENATOR FRANTZ: Thank you for that answer. And all I can say is with everything that's going on down there with NBC Sports studio moving in, with Starwood moving in, Fairway and all of the other activity down there, you're doing a terrific job. Please keep up the great work because the State can certainly use that kind of a boost, not only in terms of revenues, but in terms of morale.

Thank you.

MICHAEL PAVIA: Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR FRANTZ: Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. WIDLITZ: Thank you. Are there any other questions? Comments?

Senator -- I don't want to make you a senator.

REP. WILLIAMS: Neither do I.

REP. WIDLITZ: I keep correcting myself.

Representative Williams.

REP. WILLIAMS: I kid. I kid.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

And thank you, Mayor. Just briefly, I -- in the flurry of the last few days of the session last year, I feel like there was some discussion of the same issue or a very similar issue for the City. Is this the same?

MICHAEL PAVIA: It is.

REP. WILLIAMS: Okay. Nothing here is being changed from what had been contemplated last year.

MICHAEL PAVIA: Not at all.

REP. WILLIAMS: And that did not become law.

MICHAEL PAVIA: It did not become law.

REP. WILLIAMS: Okay. Thank you very much.

MICHAEL PAVIA: Thank you, Representative.

REP. WIDLITZ: Thank you.

Any other questions?

Thank you very much for your testimony.

MICHAEL PAVIA: Thank you very much.

REP. WIDLITZ: And for the long ride and for waiting to give your testimony. Thank you.

MICHAEL PAVIA: My pleasure. Thank you.

REP. WIDLITZ: Next Victor Antico followed by Bob Fishman and Kerry Haughton.

VICTOR ANTICO: Do I to start? It's my first time. I don't know how to do this.

REP. WIDLITZ: Just give us your name.

VICTOR ANTICO: Okay. Sorry. My name is Victor Antico. I'm owner/operator of the Holiday Inn Express Hotel in Vernon, Connecticut. We are small independently owned hotel. I'm here to speak in favor of 5420.

And I've been listening all day to all of the discussions and just thought I'd want to clear up some issues that have -- I think are misunderstood by some people as far as the hotel occupancy tax and how it affects this bill.

Basically it's a necessary evil -- that Priceline and Hotwire and all the travel sites. We don't have to use them, but it's because of the economy we really do. So there's about seven or eight of them out there that do what Priceline does and we give them

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE HEARINGS

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CITY OF STAMFORD
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

March 12, 2012

Sen. Eileen Daly
Rep. Patricia Widlitz
Co-Chairs, Finance, Revenue & Bonding Committee
Room 3700, Legislative Office Bldg.
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: Raised Bill No. 5424 - Revaluation for Certain Towns

Dear Senator Daly, Representative Widlitz and distinguished members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee:

My name is Michael Pavia and I am the Mayor of the City of Stamford. I am here today to respectfully urge your support for bill 5424, allowing the postponement of revaluation for the City of Stamford and several other municipalities in Connecticut.

As Mayor of the City of Stamford, I am keenly aware of the financial hardships that many of the City's residents and business owners are facing. The negative impact of economic recession has resulted in job losses, foreclosures, and a rising cost of living instilling APPREHENSION and uncertainty into the lives of many of our citizens.

As Mayor of Stamford, I am very fortunate to have a very diverse property base. That has not spared Stamford from the national recession that has affected Stamford's economy and all sectors of our real estate market. Property values have DECLINED to levels not witnessed in over five years. Millions, and perhaps billions, of dollars in equity have been erased from the real estate market. Rental rates have decreased. Vacancy rates are on the rise. Foreclosures are at unprecedented levels and continue to threaten more homeowners as they struggle to keep their homes and investments.

Across the country, citizens are voicing their concerns over increasing taxes and decreasing property values. As a result, there is a renewed commitment to curb excessive and unnecessary spending in municipal government.

Locally, Stamford is beginning to see early signs of recovery; new office buildings and apartment buildings are being developed in our South End and parts of the downtown. We are witnessing some stabilization in commercial rental rates, as well. Many retail stores and restaurants in our Central Business District are reporting a modest improvement in business. Yet, serious challenges remain.

Some experts believe that we are in the initial stages of a 12 to 24 month stabilization period in lower Fairfield County. Typically, such periods are accompanied by sluggish and unsteady real estate sales and leasing activity. Restoring confidence among buyers, sellers, tenants, landlords, and lenders can be a stubborn and frustratingly slow process.

Faced with the current market conditions and with the reality that stabilization is in its infancy, I am convinced that Stamford has a legitimate need to postpone its upcoming 2012 revaluation. City experts, along with other local professionals, have reported that values for commercial and industrial properties have fallen at higher rates than those of residential properties since our last revaluation.

As such, a revaluation in 2012 would be statistically skewed, in my opinion, and would adversely impact residents and small business owners in Stamford. With residential property values on firmer footing than those of commercial/industrial properties, Stamford would likely witness a shift in the property tax burden. Such a shift would bring additional financial STRESS to many of our homeowners and could possibly stifle our nascent economic recovery.

I am of the firm belief that it is wise to postpone our upcoming revaluation to October 2013, permitting market conditions to more fully stabilize and averting more pain for local homeowners and taxpayers.

While Stamford's situation may be different from other municipalities, what I and other mayors have in common is that we have the best grasp of the property market and the impact that revaluations have across all sectors of our cities and towns. We know that we must continue to balance our budgets, provide service levels that our residents expect and continue to attract businesses with an equitable property tax base.

Property taxes are the key revenue base for municipalities. By postponing this year's revaluation you are allowing us flexibility in setting the tax base of each of our cities, which is a very critical tool for any Mayor.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Pavia

Michael A. Pavia
Mayor

2011 Grand List Details:

Residential Units, Condos & Vacant Land:	34,283
Commercial, Industrial, Public Utilities, Apartments:	2,870
Total Parcel Count:	37,153

Total Grand List (2011)

Residential & Condo Units:	14,474,841,396	58.83%
Commercial (Office/Condo/Apt):	8,136,728,701	33.07%
Personal Property:	1,149,342,334	4.67%
Motor Vehicles:	845,654,699	3.43%
Total Grand List Including Exemptions:	24,606,567,130	100.00%
Total Exemptions:	304,296,805	
Total Net Taxable Grand List (2011):	**24,302,270,325**	

DECREASE/INCREASE IN GRAND LIST-REVAL YEARS 2010 & 2011				
TOWN	REVAL YR.	DECREASE	DECREASE %	INCREASE %
ASHFORD	2011		14.00%	
BEACON FALLS	2011	68,922,523	12.75%	
BRIDGEWATER	2011	30,036,373	7.70%	
BROOKFIELD	2011		17 00%	
CLINTON	2010	160,550,155	9.80%	
COLUMBIA	2011	70,494,517	13.19%	
CORNWALL	2011		13.50%	
DURHAM	2011		8.00%	
EAST HARTFORD	2011		12.94%	
EAST HAVEN	2011		14 50%	
EAST LYME	2011		12.10%	
EASTON	2011	353,083,974	21.00%	
ENFIELD	2011	3,758,520	13.00%	
FAIRFIELD	2010		10.60%	
GREENWICH	2010	3,939,209,895	21.90%	
GRISWOLD	2011		17.00%	
GROTON	2011	145,942,222	3.70%	
HAMDEN	2010		7.50%	
HEBRON	2011	99,588,090	12.96%	
LISBON	2011		9.60%	
MANCHESTER	2011	385,189,168	9 00%	
MARLBOROUGH	2011	61,500,000	9 81%	
MERIDEN	2011		12.00%	
MIDDLEBURY	2010		17.00%	
MIDDLEFIELD	2011		10 03%	
MONTVILLE	2011		20.00%	
NEW HAVEN	Based on 2007 Phase-In (frozen) with a revaluation in 2011, there was a 16.7% INCREASE			
	However, from the 2010 Grand List to the 2011 Revaluation year, there was an 8 33% decrease			
NEW MILFORD	2010		6.50%	
NEWINGTON	2011	115,000	4.30%	
PORTLAND	2011		6 60%	
PROSPECT	2011		5.90%	
PLYMOUTH	2011	66,446,978	8.06%	
RIDGEFIELD	(Ridgefield expects to go down 20-30% their revaluation year (2012))		15 00%	(Non-Revaluation Year)
SALEM	2011		17 00%	
SALISBURY	2010		4.50%	
SEYMOUR	2011		13 00%	
SHELTON	2011	768,889,185	14 40%	
STONINGTON	2011		15 88%	
THOMASTON	2011	85,000,000	16 00%	
TRUMBULL	2011	770,784,758	14 79%	
WESTBROOK	2011		15.00%	
WEST HARTFORD	2011		6.10%	
WESTPORT	2010	1,356,253,358	12.40%	
WOODSTOCK	2011		18.00%	

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CITY OF NEW HAVEN
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
165 Church Street, New Haven, CT 06510
Phone (203)-946-8200, Fax (203)-946-7683

John DeStefano, Jr.
Mayor

Testimony of the City of New Haven to the Finance Committee

Regarding

H.B. No. 5424 AN ACT CONCERNING DELAYS IN REVALUATION FOR CERTAIN TOWNS

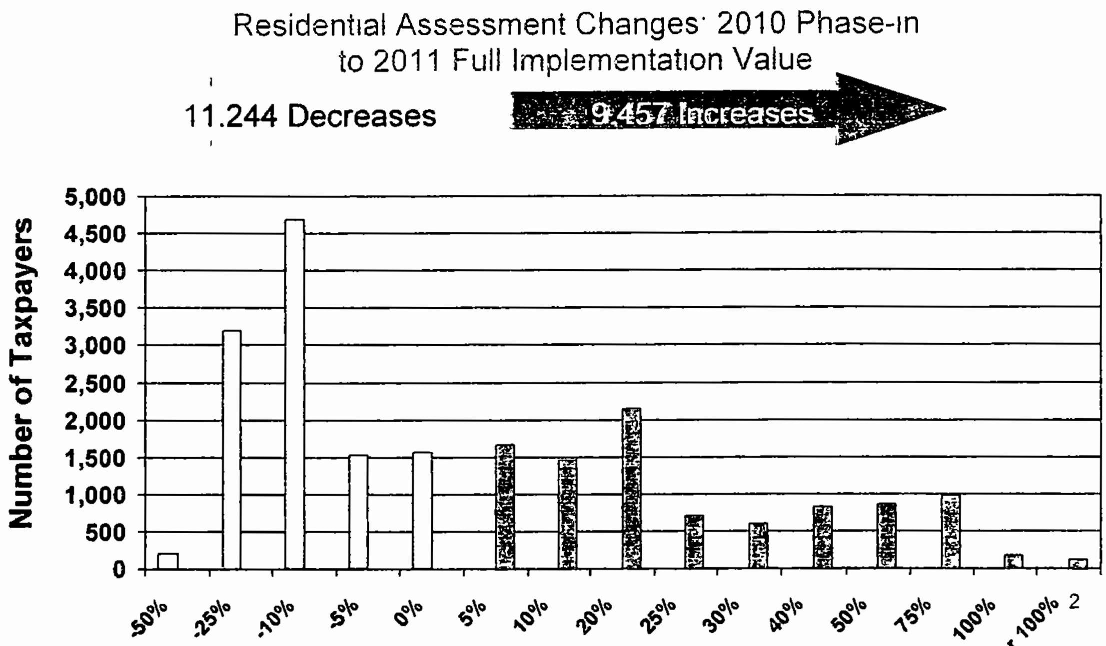
Submitted by
Rebecca Bombero, Legislative Director, City of New Haven
March 12, 2012

Senator Daily, Rep. Widlitz, and members of the Finance Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to comment upon HB 5424 and the revaluation process. State statute requires a municipality to conduct a revaluation of all real property to capture the changes in fair market value to ensure an equitable distribution of the property tax burden.

Property taxes however, are the most regressive forms of taxes and do not take in to consideration. a property owners ability to pay, and there are great differences in tax rates between communities throughout the state as some communities have large amounts of exempt property, others shoulder large services burdens hosting low income housing and at risk populations – including large amounts of ex-offenders. Some communities, like New Haven, face both challenges. Despite these challenges New Haven works to encourage home ownership, attract businesses and build a vibrant community.

In 2006, the City of New Haven conducted a statistical revaluation of properties. This occurred at the relative height of the property market. In this revaluation all property appreciated, with residential property appreciating the most. As result, the City elected to institute five year phase-in as permitted CGS 12-62c to gradually shift this tax burden. Unfortunately, in fall 2008, the housing market collapsed. We began to see values fall and were concerned that further progress of the phase-in would result in a property tax burden that was not reflective of current market conditions – people who would be paying taxes on far more than their property was worth. In 2009, the General Assembly passed PA 09-60 which enabled municipalities to delay revaluation, or to freeze the implementation of phase-ins until the market stabilized.

In 2011, the City conducted a new revaluation. What we witnessed in the valuation is an extremely volatile market. Due to very low commercial vacancy rates, our commercial values continued to grow. The residential market was very different. Over half of property owners saw their properties values decrease from the frozen 2010 values. Take my home for instance – the 2006 assessment was $230,000. The 2010 phased in assessment is $168,410, the new, 2011 value is $165,406. Over 11,244 properties saw such decreases ranging from small like mine to up to 10, 25 or 50%. The remaining 9,457 residential properties saw increases. While some were small and between the 2010 frozen value, and the 2006 full value, many properties had continued to appreciate since 2006 and saw increases of 30, 40 50 and up to and over 100% from the frozen 2010 values.



After the completion of the initial v[illegible]series of eight community meetings where he met with property owners from throughout the City. People were concerned, and many were scared. People who are already struggling afraid that they would no longer be able to afford their homes. Some argue that those who paid the $600,000 or the $2M for their homes can afford the increases. This may be fair – but you worry about the widow next door – who has lived in the home 20 years, who paid $60,000 when both she and her husband were working, who raised their family there, and now is on a fixed income. They may live in a $600k home, but they are asset rich and cash poor. Or what about the teacher and the firefighter – who bought the home on Orange Street for $150,000 ten years ago who now have a $400,000 property.

Over the course of the winter the Mayor met with members of our Board of Aldermen and we talked about different scenarios:

- We could ask to not implement. But what about the 11,244 people whose properties went down? What about the $2M we just spent on the revaluation.
- We could fully implement – but what about the little old lady, or the couple on Orange Street – or better yet – Chatham Square, a neighborhood that 10 years ago had numerous boarded up homes where homeownership is on the rise, where an active neighborhood association has helped drive down crime and beautify the neighborhood – where drastic increases could truly tip the neighborhood back the other way, where the average home saw almost a 20% increase.

- We could phase-in from the 2006 values (as permitted by 12-62c). However 76% of those benefits would be to commercial properties – mainly those in the downtown core where the vacancy rate is 8% - the lowest in the state – and one of the lowest in New England.
- Or we could do something different. The City looked a number of different programs all over the country. We reviewed homestead tax credits, we reviewed circuit breakers and we looked at how limiting the eligibility of a phase in could offer the homeowner protection.

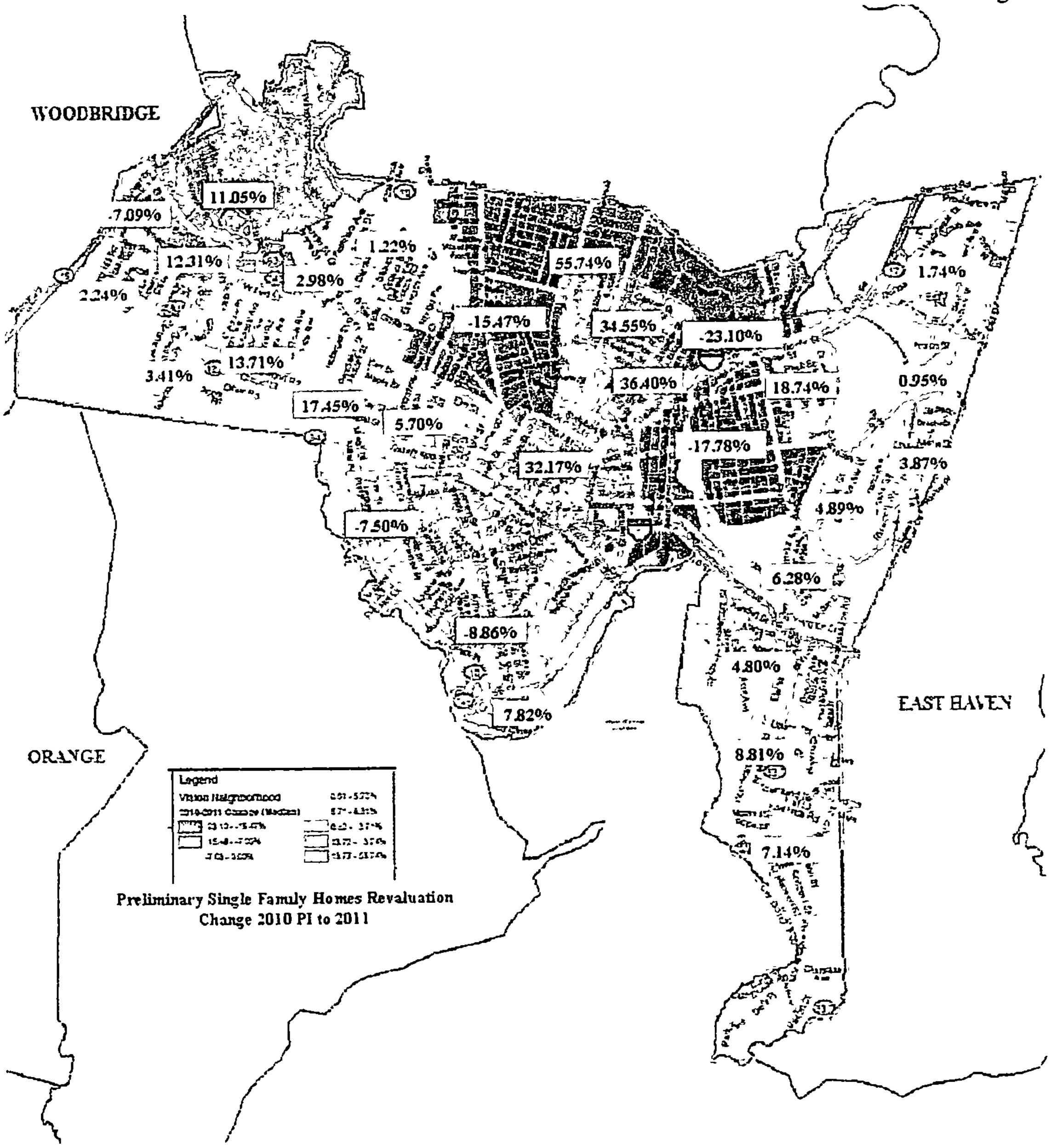
The solution:

While there is no silver bullet – no fix to solve all problems – the Mayor and the Board have devised a plan that would accomplish homeowner protection and will have the smallest impact on the rest of the grand list. A phase in from the 2010 frozen assessment but only for those owner occupied residential properties.

- This program would require the re-distribution of approximately $9M of tax dollars and would raise the potential mill rate from 38.96 to 40.56 – 1.6 mills or about 4%
- The mill rate of 40.56 would still be lower than the current mill rate of 43.90.
- The number of owner occupied residential properties that saw increase would drop from approximately 4,541 under full implementation to only approximately 1,425 – and the size of these increases would be approximately 80% smaller.
- Increases would gradually be eased in over 5 years to allow homeowners time to adjust.

What does this mean – let's go back to my own home as example. Currently I pay about $7,393 in taxes. If the grand list was fully implemented my tax bill would be $6,452, under this proposal I would pay $6,717 a difference of only $265. Bottom line - for me this is still a $676 decrease. Now lets take the widow – one that I used to live next door to on Foster Street. Current taxes are $7,546, under full implementation that would go to $9,703 – a $2,162 or 28% increase or just over $40 a week! Under this proposal her taxes would only go to $7,598 in the first year – a $52 increase for the year.

I look forward to continuing the conversation with revaluation with you all. Attached to my testimony you will find a map of the impacts of revaluation on single family homes and full language for our proposal. You can find more information about our revaluation and our proposal in presentations on the City's web page. Thank you for your consideration and I would be happy to answer any questions.



Preliminary Single Family Homes Revaluation
Change 2010 PI to 2011

PROPOSAL

PURPOSE:

The goal of this legislation is to enable the City of New Haven to implement a five year phase-in of the 2011 GL from the 2010 Grand List used for tax purposes (2nd Year Phase-in of the 2006 Revaluation) only for Owner Occupied Residential Properties. The intention of owner occupied parcels is to limit to individuals that claim such residence as their primary residence and extends to both the owner and an individual who has life use of the property. It is not the intention that this Owner Occupied Phase-in will effect any existing exemptions including but not limited to those for veterans, seniors or the blind. The legislation is modeled off of existing CGS 12-62c, Public Acts 09-60, and 11-212.

THE FORUMLAS (for a five year phase-in):

Year 1: 2011 GL = 2010 GL + $\frac{\text{(2011 ASSESSMENT – 2010 ASSESSMENT)}}{(5)}$

Year 2: 2012 GL = 2011 GL + $\frac{\text{(2012 ASSESSMENT –2010 ASSESSMENT)}}{(5)}$

Year 3: 2013 GL = 2012 GL + $\frac{\text{(2013 ASSESSMENT – 2010 ASSESSMENT)}}{(5)}$

Year 4: 2014 GL = 2013 GL + $\frac{\text{(2014 ASSESSMENT – 2010 ASSESSMENT)}}{(5)}$

Year 5: 2015 GL = 2014 GL + $\frac{\text{(2015 ASSESSMENT – 2010 ASSESSMENT)}}{(5)}$

Example 1:

2001 GL	$70,000		
2006 GL	$130,000		
2010 PI GL	$100,000	**BASE AMOUNT**	
2011 GL	$200,000		
2011 PI GL	1	$100,000 + ($200,000 - $100,000)/5	$120,000
2012 PI GL	2	$120,000 + ($200,000 - $100,000)/5	$140,000
2013 PI GL	3	$140,000 + ($200,000 - $100,000)/5	$160,000
2014 PI GL	4	$160,000 + ($200,000 - $100,000)/5	$180,000
2015 PI GL	5	$180,000 + ($200,000 - $100,000)/5	$200,000

Example 2:

2001 GL	$200,000		
2006 GL	$350,000		
2010 PI GL	$260,000	**BASE AMOUNT**	
2011 GL	$300,000		
2011 PI GL	1	$260,000 + ($300,000 - $260,000)/5	$268,000
2012 PI GL	2	$268,000 + ($300,000 - $260,000)/5	$276,000
2013 PI GL	3	$276,000 + ($300,000 - $260,000)/5	$284,000
2014 PI GL	4	$284,000 + ($300,000 - $260,000)/5	$292,000
2015 PI GL	5	$292,000 + ($300,000 - $260,000)/5	$300,000

Draft Language:

Sec. 1. (NEW) *(Effective July 1, 2012, and applicable to assessment years commencing on or after October 1, 2011)* (a) For the purposes of this section:

(1) "Residential property" means a building containing four or fewer dwelling units used for human habitation, the parcel of land on which such building is situated, and any accessory buildings or other improvements located on such parcel.

(2) "Owner Occupied" means any property where the owner occupies that property as his or her principal residence at least one hundred eighty-three (183) days of each year, or any tenant for life or tenant for a term of years liable for property taxes under section 12-48 as attested to on forms provided by such municipality and submitted no later than June 1st of the effective tax year.

(3) "Base Amount" means the assessment adopted pursuant to 12-62p (b) and used for the purposes of tax bills issued in on July 1, 2011.

(b) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes, any municipal charter, any special act, any home rule ordinance or any other local law, any municipality in which the provisions of section 12-62p (b) of the general statutes are effective for the assessment year commencing October 1, 2010, may, by ordinance, adopt the property tax system described in this section, provided the assessor of such municipality detèrmines that without implementation of such property tax system, implementation of a revaluation for the assessment year commencing October 1, 2011, would result in some residential property increases in excess of one-hundred percent.

(c) (1) A town implementing a property tax system defined in this section may phase-in a real property assessment increase of owner occupied residential properties by requiring the assessor to gradually increase the assessment applicable to such properties in the effective assessment year preceding that in which the revaluation is implemented. The base amount shall be subtracted from the assessment of each such owner occupied residential parcel in the effective year of said revaluation, and the annual amount of the annual incremental assessment increase for each such parcel shall be the total of such subtraction divided by the number of years of the phase-in term.

(2) The legislative body of the town shall approve the decision to provide for such phase-in, provided the number of assessment years over which such gradual increases are reflected shall not exceed five assessment years, including the assessment year for which the revaluation is effective.

(3) The legislative body may approve the discontinuance of a phase-in of real property assessment increases resulting from the implementation of a revaluation, at any time prior to the completion of the phase-in term originally approved, provided such approval shall be made on or before the assessment date that is the commencement of the assessment year in which such discontinuance is effective. In the assessment year following the completion or discontinuance of the phase-in, assessments shall reflect the valuation of real property established for such revaluation, subject to additions for new construction and reductions for demolitions occurring subsequent to the date of revaluation and on or prior to the date of its completion or

discontinuance, and the rate of assessment applicable in such year, as required by section 12-62a.

(d) The assessment of any new construction that first becomes subject to taxation during an assessment year encompassed within the term of a phase-in shall be determined in the same manner as the assessment of all other comparable real property in said assessment year, such that the total of incremental increases applicable to such other comparable real property are reflected in the assessment of such new construction prior to the proration of such assessment pursuant to section 12-53a.

(e) Not later than thirty business days after the date a town's legislative body votes to phase-in real property assessment increases resulting from such revaluation, or votes to discontinue such a phase-in, the chief executive officer of the town shall notify the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, in writing, of the action taken. Any chief executive officer failing to submit a notification to said secretary as required by this subsection, shall forfeit one hundred dollars to the state for each such failure.

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ESTABLISHED 1659
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TESTIMONY – HB 5424

March 12, 2012

Madam Chairman & Honorable Committee Members

Thank you for the opportunity to address your Committee I will make my comments brief and will be available to answer any questions you might have

My name is Donna Ralston and I am the Assessor for the City of Norwich I am here on behalf of the City Manager, Alan Bergren to speak in favor of HB 5424 in which the City of Norwich is requesting a delay in the statutorily required revaluation that the City is required to implement by October 1, 2013

As the bill is currently written, Section 1 would not give any relief to the City of Norwich We are currently scheduled to implement our next revaluation as of October 1, 2013 With that said, I would first like to respectfully request that the assessment year commencing date within section 1 of the bill be changed from October 1, 2013 to October 1, 2014.

Norwich is a beautiful "distressed municipality", located half way between the Mohegan Sun Casino and Foxwoods The 2011, third quarter survey done by CBIA indicated that confidence in the overall CT economy is improving, however it also noted that the shift has yet to be reflected in New London County Norwich is a prime example of those results We are struggling to revitalize and attract new business

The cost of performing the 2008 revaluation was $567,000 for 13,075 parcels It most assuredly has gone up since then and the City feels it is an unfunded mandate that it just cannot afford at his time

The real estate market is virtually non-existent with the exception of foreclosures and/or short sales Similar properties sometimes sell for vastly different prices These are not the sales that we should be using to perform a fair, equitable revaluation. Value would be difficult, if not impossible to determine, explain and most importantly defend The City needs at least a year to allow for more "arms-length" transactions to occur.

It is also important to note that we still have 6 tax appeals remaining from the 2008 revaluation Values determined in this type of a market are surely to be appealed The financial impact of the increased legal and appraisal fees would be devastating to the City budget and would create an unexpected decrease in tax revenues

On behalf of the City of Norwich, I respectfully request that you consider passage of HB 5424

Thank you for your attention and I would be happy to answer any questions

Donna L Ralston, CCMA II
Assessor, City of Norwich

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line 6
pg. 13

Town of Windham

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March 12, 2012 Testimony:
House Bill No. 5424. "An Act Concerning Delays in Revaluation for Certain Towns"

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before your Committee I am here today to testify at the request of Neal Beets, Town Manager for the Town of Windham. My name is Joan Paskewich, and I have been Assessor for the Town for nearly twenty years, for a total of 35 years in the assessment profession I was a member of two committees with the Property Tax Reform Commission in 1995, and *advocated* for the *increased frequency* of revaluations, from ten years to five years.

I could never have pictured myself before you today, to request a revaluation deferral; in fact, the Town of Windham performed a revaluation in 2005, a year EARLIER than required by statute, following the 2001 revaluation At that time, the real estate market was healthy, arms-length sales were plentiful, and I had confidence that we could produce fair, equitable values that were defensible in court and to the taxpayers.

Current declining real estate market conditions are historical and unprecedented To conduct a revaluation in the Town of Windham at this time, a CT designated "Distressed Municipality", could have some dire results

Our "Service District" encompasses our struggling downtown and an abundance of tax exempt properties, including Eastern CT State University and Windham Hospital. It also carries the *fourth highest mill rate in the State.* Real estate values have decreased here significantly since the 2005 revaluation, which will require *even higher mill rates at current spending levels.* Although we achieved a 1% increase on the 2010 Grand List, the highest of our neighboring towns, we experienced **three** referendums before budgets were accepted. Trying to pass a budget, *starting* with a conservative 10-20% drop in real estate values, say, a *3+ mill increase*, would be a virtual bloodbath in our Town

There are a significant number of large and complex commercial properties on our Grand List **Increased mill rates will seriously impact their business personal property tax bills.** Our Town struggles under *current* circumstances to attract and keep businesses This would be a potential kiss of death. the opposite of desperately needed economic development.

We have an extraordinary number of foreclosures and short sales in our inventory, with a corresponding decrease in "arm's length transactions". This makes it extremely difficult to establish defensible values that are also credible to the public

The purpose of a revaluation is to correct inequities in assessments, in a fair and equitable manner. The Town of Windham, at this time, *does not have enough reliable data* to assure this result. I also fear that we could not satisfy the numerous requirements of State mandated Revaluation Performance Based Standards.

We have only one tax appeal remaining from the 2005 revaluation. Performing a revaluation under current circumstances opens the flood gate to new appeals. We have tracked other towns whose Grand Lists declined recently following their revaluations; the following years demonstrated *continued* Grand List declines from tax appeals. The financial impact is also realized from increased legal and appraisal fees. *This jeopardizes stability in future Grand Lists and the ability to rely on budgeted tax revenues*

In closing, the Town of Windham does not minimize the importance of revaluations; in fact, we have conducted two revaluations in five years 2001 and 2005 If we defer until, say, 2013, we will have *averaged one revaluation every 4 3 years*, as compared to every five years.

Thank you for the opportunity to endorse this important Bill I would be happy to address any questions, now or in the future.

Joan E. Paskewich, CCMA II, SPA, Assessor

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CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE

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2012

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concurrence with the Senate.

Total number voting	135
Necessary for passage	68
Those voting Yea	135
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	16

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

The bill passes in concurrence with the Senate.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar Number 383?

THE CLERK:

On page 18, Calendar 383, Substitute for House Bill Number 5424, AN ACT CONCERNING DELAYS IN REVALUATION FOR CERTAIN TOWNS, favorable report by the Committee on Finance.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Patricia Widlitz.

REP. WIDLITZ (98th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I move acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

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

Will you remark, Representative Widlitz?

REP. WIDLITZ (98th):

Yes, thank you, Madam Speaker.

This bill allows the city -- Norwich, Farmington, Windham, Stamford and New Britain to delay the next sch -- scheduled reval date to the 2013 assessment.

I move adoption, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Thank you, Representative Widlitz.

Will you care to remark further on the bill before us? Will you care to remark further on the bill before us?

Representative Floren.

REP. FLOREN (49th):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I rise in support of this bill. It was a very necessary thing for the towns mentioned. It is a delay to a time certain and it is a special -- a special request and we're very grateful for any support that we can have in the House.

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Thank you, Madam.

Will you care to remark further?

Representative Wadsworth of the 21st, you have the floor sir.

REP. WADSWORTH (21st):

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I also rise to support the passage of the bill and urge all of my colleagues to support it also.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

A VOICE:

(Inaudible).

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Thank you, sir.

Will you care to remark further on the bill as amended -- whoops -- ill you care to remark further on the bill, further on the bill? Will you care to remark further?

If not staff and guests please come to the well of the House. Members take your seats. The machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

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

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? Please check the board to determine if your vote is properly cast. If so the machine will be locked and the Clerk will please take a tally.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Oh excuse me while the Deputy Speaker votes.

Thank you very much.

The machine will be now locked and the Clerk will please take a tally.

Representative Guerrera, for what purpose do you rise sir?

REP. GUERRERA (29th):

Madam Speaker, I'd like to cast my vote in the affirmative please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Guerrera in the affirmative please.

Representative Betty Boukus.

REP. BOUKUS (22nd):

Yes, Madam Speaker I too would like to vote in the affirmative, how about you?

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Representative Boukus in the affirmative please.

I guess I wasn't the only one.

Representative Robles.

REP. ROBLES (6th):

Madam Speaker, if you could show me in the affirmative as well.

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

Of course, Representative Robles in the affirmative please.

Now have all members voted? Have all members voted?

Representative Piscopo, have all members voted on your side? I guess so, okay.

Will the Clerk please announce the tally? Will the Clerk please announce the tally?

THE CLERK:

House Bill 5424.

Total number voting	134
Necessary for passage	68
Those voting Yea	132
Those voting Nay	2
Those absent and not voting	17

DEPUTY SPEAKER ORANGE:

The bill passes.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar Number 450?

THE CLERK:

On page 26, Calendar 450, Substitute for Senate Bill Number 302, AN ACT CONCERNING TECHNICAL REVISIONS

S - 648

CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SENATE

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On calendar page 28, Calendar 512, House Bill 5424. Madam President, move to place the item on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

And a final item is on calendar page 30, Calendar 522, House Bill 5289. Madam President, move to place this item on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, if the Clerk would -- would read the items on the consent calendar for a verification and then if we might move to a vote on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you, sir.

THE CLERK:

On page 6, Calendar 364, House Bill 5089; page 7, Calendar 378, House Bill 5554; page 8, Calendar 391, House Bill 5446; page 9, Calendar 395, House Bill 5483.

On page 10, Calendar 402, House Bill 5299; page 12, Calendar 425, House Bill 5476.

On page 13, Calendar 426, House Bill 5443; on page 14, Calendar 438, House Bill 5347; Page 14, Calendar 439, House Bill 5388; page 15, Calendar 441, House Bill 5501.

Also on page 15, Calendar 442, House Bill 5536; page 16, Calendar 445, House Bill 5145; page 16, Calendar 446, House Bill 5395; on page 16, Calendar 448, House Bill 5414; page 17, Calendar 451, House Bill 5548; page 18, Calendar 456, House Bill 5285.

Also on page 18, Calendar 458, House Bill 5031; on page 20, Calendar 468, House Bill 5217; page 21, Calendar 471, House Bill 5164; page 22, Calendar 476, House Bill 5263.

On page 23, Calendar 485, House Bill 5237. On page 25, Calendar 497, House Bill 5512; page 26, Calendar 502, House Bill 5497; page 26, Calendar 503, House Bill 5409.

On page 28, Calendar 512, House Bill 5424. And on page 30, Calendar 522, House Bill 5289.

THE CHAIR:

That seems correct.

Mr. Clerk, would you please call for a roll call vote on the consent calendar. (Inaudible.)

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate. Will senators please return to the Chamber. Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Gomes, would you like to vote, please. Thank you.

If all members have voted, if all members have voted, the machine will be closed.

Mr. Clerk, would you please call a tally.

THE CLERK:

On today's consent calendar,

Total Number Voting 35
Necessary for passage 18
Those Voting Yea 35
Those Voting Nay 0
Those Absent and Not Voting 1

THE CHAIR:

The consent calendar passes.

Are there any points of personal privilege or announcements? Are there any points of personal privilege or announcements?

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Yes, Madam President, if there are no announcements or points of personal privilege, we will, of course, be in session tomorrow -- or actually it's later today but -- but not on Thursday. But --

THE CHAIR:

Okay. Promise?

SENATOR LOONEY:

-- we will -- we will convene later this morning. We will have a -- announce the Democratic caucus at eleven followed by session at noon today.

Thank you, Madam President.

With that, would move the Senate stand adjourned, subject to the call of the chair.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered, sir. Everybody drive safely.

On motion of Senator Looney of the 11th, the Senate, at 12:32 a.m. adjourned subject to the call of the chair.