



# neccog

*Results Through Regionalism*

## Testimony before the Planning and Development Committee

### Municipal Shared Services and Regional Efficiencies Forum

February 27, 2018

Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you today and to share some thoughts on regionalism. Today, I will discuss the benefits of the regional council of governments approach, the current state of fracture that the delivery of services in our state exists, share with you specific examples of regionalism in our region and their impacts to both the costs of services and the improved efficiencies in the delivery of services, and specific recommendations for statutory changes to enhance the use of regional solutions and build regional capacity.

The region covered by the Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (NECCOG) is made up of 16 of the state's 169 municipalities. The member towns are:

**Ashford, Brooklyn, Canterbury, Chaplin, Eastford, Hampton, Killingly, Plainfield, Pomfret, Putnam,**

**Scotland, Sterling, Thompson, Union, Voluntown and**

**Woodstock.** Geographically, the Region is large (just over ten percent of Connecticut's total area) - covering 562.8 square miles. The Region is located close to New England's largest metropolitan areas: Providence, Rhode Island, and Worcester and Boston, Massachusetts. The region has approximately 96,000 residents (187 per square mile compared to 648 for the state) or about 2.7 percent of the State's total population. The average population for our towns is just under 6,000 persons. The largest population is found in Killingly (17,250) and the smallest in Union (also the State's smallest population with 855 persons).



NECCOG is one of nine regional councils of governments and has been in place since 1987 when the General Assembly first authorized this option for regions. The General Assembly, as a result of a recommendation from the Municipal Opportunities and Regional Efficiencies (MORE) Commission enacted legislation consolidating the 15 planing regions to nine regional councils of governments in 2013. In doing so, the General Assembly enabled municipalities through their respective regional council of governments' broad regional authority<sup>1</sup> to utilize regional approaches to their individual and collective needs - making the need for county government unnecessary. The following is the current law regarding the authority of regional councils of governments to provide services. Its format has been modified for clarity.

<sup>1</sup> Section 8-31b of the Connecticut General Statutes, (*emphasis added*)

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- *A regional council of governments may accept or participate in any grant, donation or program available to any political subdivision of the state and may also accept or participate in any grant, donation or program made available to counties by any other governmental or private entity.*
- *Notwithstanding the provisions of any special or public act, any political subdivision of the state may enter into an agreement with a regional council of governments to perform jointly or to provide, alone or in cooperation with any other entity, any service, activity or undertaking that the political subdivision is authorized by law to perform.*
- *A regional council of governments established pursuant to this section may administer and provide regional services to municipalities and may delegate such authority to subregional groups of such municipalities.*
- *Regional services provided to member municipalities shall be determined by each regional council of governments, except as provided in subsection (b) of section 9-229 and section 9-229b, and may include, without limitation, the following services:*

- |                                |                              |                               |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| (1) Engineering;               | (12) Data Management;        | (20) Vocational Training and  |
| (2) Inspectional and Planning; | (13) Regional Sewerage;      | Development;                  |
| (3) Economic Development;      | (14) Housing;                | (21) Solid Waste Disposal;    |
| (4) Public Safety;             | (15) Computerized Mapping;   | (22) Fire Protection;         |
| (5) Emergency Management;      | (16) Household Hazardous     | (23) Regional Resource        |
| (6) Animal Control;            | Waste Collection;            | Protection;                   |
| (7) Land Use Management;       | (17) Recycling;              | (24) Regional Impact Studies; |
| (8) Tourism Promotion;         | (18) Public Facility Siting; | and                           |
| (9) Social;                    | (19) Coordination of Master  | (25) Transportation.          |
| (10) Health;                   | Planning;                    |                               |
| (11) Education;                |                              |                               |

As shown above, regional councils of governments currently have authority similar to counties for the provision of services. The actions taken by these regional COGs to provide such services are determined by their member towns - through their respective CEOs - which are accountable to the voters in their towns. In essence, Connecticut now has a system that provides the benefits of a county government system in terms of acting regionally - without the added administrative layer (including costs) that counties bring. The reluctance to embrace regionalism or shared services has little to do with the absence of a county system. As shown, in terms of service delivery, regional councils of governments are empowered to provide services on a shared or regional basis. As demonstrated in my original testimony, several COGs have embraced the approach and provide a range of services that result in measurable efficiencies and significant cost savings. These regional or collaborative approaches demonstrate that there is not a "one size fits all" solution to the service challenges of our municipalities. COGs, unlike counties, provide a more flexible opt in or out of services option for their members.

In the vast majority of states, counties play a significant role in the provision of services. Connecticut has eight counties that serve no administrative function. The 169 cities and towns in Connecticut hold strong to their identity and home rule authority both real and perceived. This belief is well stated in a June 2003 article from the Maine Center for Economic Policy Choices - "Regionalism, New England Style<sup>2</sup>" by Evan Richert:

*The New England town is an icon because it is a model of self-assembly: individuals organizing themselves into a community, not by executive order, but by following simple rules of civility and democracy. For three centuries the New England town has adapted when it had to, slowly and conservatively, and kept its preeminence.*

*It has, for example, molded home rule to its needs, even when it did not actually exist. The tradition of self government stems from colonial days. But tradition isn't law, and for most of their histories New England towns*

<sup>2</sup> Regionalism, New England Style- Evan D. Richert, Maine Center for Economic Policy, Choices, June 18, 2003, Vol. IX, Number 4

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*have been entirely creatures of the state. It was only 50 years ago, during a new era of federalism, that voters fortified towns with constitutional home rule in a majority of New England states (Vermont remains the exception). Even now home rule is limited: in the words of a recent report from the Brookings Institution, "one part law and two parts motto." But it has helped the New England town resist top-down efforts to impose regionalism, despite calls for efficiency, the protection of large environmental systems, and the management of sprawl.*

*The frugality of New England town government makes its inefficiency a puzzle.*

*The challenge is to find a form of regional governance that simultaneously reduces the number of general purpose units of government with taxing authority, resembles the New England town in its accessibility, frugality, and volunteerism, and allows that form to take shape through self-organization. The approach must be bottom-up, participatory, and producing regions that match up better with contemporary movements of people and resources. This means reaching agreement on a few rules of engagement, and then letting a higher order pattern evolve, as it will, from the town level upward.*

The capacity to initiate and sustain regional collaboration hinges on four types of essential resources: leadership, a constituency for change, organization, and technical information.

University of Montana, Public Policy  
Research Institute, April 15, 2008

Connecticut fits the description described above. The imposition (which is how many would view it) of counties would, I believe, be resisted as an attempt to expand government and impose costs (taxes) on the residents of the state. Regional councils of governments better fit the New England and Connecticut traditions of governance. The challenge is to utilize the opportunities provided by COGs to most fully benefit our state. That is why I provided multiple suggestions to enhance the capacity of our regional COGs with this testimony.

As you are already aware, Connecticut while a small state geographically is extremely fractured in its structure<sup>3</sup>. We have 169 Towns, 8 Counties (at least on paper), 33 Cities or Boroughs, 310 Zip Codes (which most people associate with their home), 6 Core Statistical Areas, 17 Urbanized Areas, 151 State House Districts, 36 State Senate Districts, 5 Congressional Districts, 7 Metropolitan Planning Organizations, 4 Transportation Management Areas, 15 Regional Transit Districts, 5 Homeland Security Regions, 13 Judicial Districts, 22 Judicial Branch Areas, 12 Juvenile Courts, 54 Probate Court Districts, 11 State Police Districts, 585 Fire Departments, 282 Fire Districts, 5 Workforce Development Boards, 9 Labor Market Areas, 8 Service Delivery Areas for Job Training, 8 Workers' Compensation Districts, 104 911 Locations, 5 Regional Mental Health Boards, 3 Department of Development Services Regions, 12 su-regions for the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, 12 CAP Agencies, 6 DCF Regions, 6 Family Support Network Regions, 25 DCF Collaborative Areas, 15 United Way Areas, 6 Regional Education Service Areas, 43 Elementary School Districts, 156 Secondary School Districts, 17 Regional School Districts, 73 Health Departments, 31 Acute Care Hospitals, 6 VFW Regions and 8 Comprehensive Economic Development Regions<sup>4</sup>. **This list is not a complete one but it does demonstrate the fractured nature of how we or our state deliver services locally and on a state basis.** Since 1950, Japan has reduced its number of local governments by 70 percent - today having about the same number of local governments as New York. Additionally, the fractured nature of our state as demonstrated above does not take into account service delivery. Connecticut has a multitude of organizations (public and private) often doing the same basic service with little or no coordination.

<sup>3</sup> See Attachment B for details

<sup>4</sup> MORE Commission, <http://www2.housedems.ct.gov/more/RegEnt/documents.asp>

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We are confident that through the increased use of planned regionalism that we can make local and state government more efficient and less costly. NECCOG currently provides a range of services for our member towns (as well as several outside of our region). Our current services include:

- Crumbling Foundations
- Regional Property Revaluation Program
- Regional Paramedic Intercept Program
- Regional Animal Services Program
- Trap, Neuter, Release and Maintain Program
- Regional Engineering Program
- Regional Mapping (GIS) Services
- Land Use Services
- Regional Comprehensive Planning
- Economic Development
- Eastern Connecticut Enterprise Corridor Administration
- Transit District Administration
- Transportation Planning and Technical Assistance
- Route 169 National Scenic Byway Administration
- Emergency Management Planning/Assistance
- Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning
- Regional, State Federal Relations
- Regional Human Services Advisory Council
- Assistance with state/federal agencies
- Town hall management assessment including job descriptions
- Board/commission training
- Grant assistance
- Census and other demographic data
- Meeting facilitation
- Household hazardous waste collection Day Coordination

The following are NECCOG regional services to show the variety of regional programs currently in place realizing results:

- **Regional Property Revaluation** - Enabling legislation passed in 2009 allowed regional councils of governments to take on property revaluation. In 2010, NECCOG began the Regional Revaluation Program. Eleven of NECCOG's then 12 towns, as well as the Town of Sprague participated in the initial program cycle (5 years). The Program is estimated to have saved the Region more than \$650,000. The program is unique in that each town has 50 percent of its property inspected every five years and that number is used to calculate the other fifty percent - the result being a lessening of the volatility associated with only conducting full inspections every 10 years. The new law also allowed for real dates to be altered so that parcel total could be equalized during a five year period. Beginning in 2016, the second five-year cycle for the Program began with 14 towns participating and an estimated savings of 47 percent compared to a traditional approach to revaluation. Another benefit to this program is that it provides towns with a specific reval cost compared to the current practice of guessing.
- **Regional Animal Services** - Each town in Connecticut is required to have an animal control person to address issues related to domestic animals. Most small towns and many medium sized towns have only a part-time person covering animal control - which was the case in each of the region's towns. NECCOG, since 2004, has operated a regional animal services program. The Program began with three towns and now serves 18 towns with 24/7/365 services. To date, the program has placed more than 5,700 animals and no animal has been euthanized due to lack of space. Savings to the participating towns has ranged from 10 to sixty percent. However, more importantly the services to residents and their animals has been markedly improved.
- **Regional Paramedic Intercept Services** - In 1999, NECCOG began a regional paramedic program. The regional program provides approximately 2,200 paramedic transports per year. Paramedic Intercept service, also known as Advanced Life Support (ALS) provides a higher level of care delivered in the field to patients in need. The Region's local ambulance services or Basic Life Support (BLS) are provided by each town and are

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staffed by EMTs. While EMTs can provide a range of services, they can not provide treatments that one would find in a triage unit of an emergency room. Due to the relatively low volume of medical calls a regional approach to ALS was suggested in 1999. NECCOG agreed to coordinate and subsidize the program and secured an ALS vendor to provide ALS services. Costs are covered by a transport fee to participating towns and grants from Day Kimball Hospital and Backus Hospital. ALS is a very expensive, cost prohibitive venture for rural ambulance departments; going regional was the only way to maintain this necessary program.

These are a few examples of what is going on now to foster collective or regional action. Much more can be done. A recent study by the Federal Reserve Bank in Boston titled "The Quest for Cost-Efficient Local Government in New England: What Role for Regional Consolidation?"<sup>5</sup> looked at Connecticut and specifically at 911 services and Public Health service delivery. Their study estimated that by changing to a regional-based approach (the study used the eight counties) the savings would be "roughly 60 percent." As to the quality of service, the study concluded that "...consolidation appears to have the potential to shorten the interval between 9-1-1 calls and the dispatch of first responders, an improvement that in turn would tend to have a beneficial impact on survival outcomes and other indicators of service effectiveness." The Federal Reserve Study also examined the consolidation of health departments. Connecticut currently has 73 health departments ranging from several regional districts to part-time health departments. Service levels and emphasis is not consistent from department to department. The study found that Connecticut has the second highest fragmentation of local health departments in the nation. The study concluded that a regional approach could result in \$25.4 million savings (41.3 percent) compared to the current approach.

NECCOG is currently exploring fourteen new services for possible action this year. These new programs are:

- |   |                              |   |
|---|------------------------------|---|
| • Regional Audit Services                         | • Legal Services             | • Household Hazardous Waste                 |
| • Regional Social Services/<br>Veteran's Advocate | • Regional Assessor          | • Regional Economic<br>Development Director |
| • Regional Land Use Planner                       | • Regional Building Official | • Regional Housing Authority                |
| • Back Office Functions                           | • Regional IT Services       | • Regional Ethic Commission                 |
|   | • Permitting                 |   |

With a clear upside to working together - why are we not seeing more communities seeking inter-town or regional solutions. One key reason relates to revenues. *"Constraints on municipal revenue raising and expenditure make local officials averse to inter-local arrangements that might further diminish their power. They are equally reluctant to consider cooperative arrangements with other municipalities involving expenditures because of lingering fears that they may not come out ahead—or that voters will think a neighboring competitor has snookered them. So deep is this fear that some officials avoid cooperative efforts that would benefit their towns if the other municipality appears to get more out of the deal."*<sup>6</sup>

The recent consolidation of the 15 Regional Planning Organization to nine regional councils of governments was done purposely to have in place regions that were accountable to their member towns (COGs are operated by each towns respective CEO). **COGs are the building blocks for regionalism in Connecticut.** The COGs have a unique position as regional facilitators for establishing the framework for cooperation, providing support, monitoring, evaluating, and disseminating best practices that can be replicated in other COG regions. They offer an established model for regional collaboration and innovation. The State can strengthen existing regional infrastructure/capacity, using COGs (which are political subdivisions of the state), to support regional initiatives and collaboration to take advantage of the existing regional infrastructure and expertise that the COGs can provide.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.bostonfed.org/neppc> The Quest for Cost-Efficient Local Government in New England: What Role for Regional Consolidation?

<sup>6</sup> <https://commonwealthmagazine.org/politics/let-towns-have-more-power-and-regional-planning-may-follow/>

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To foster regional capacity and to enhance the use of regionalism (statutory language attached in Attachment C) in Connecticut we suggest the following:

**1. Modify Section 2-27 of the General Statutes regarding the charge and membership of the Connecticut Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations**

The Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR), which is administratively part of the Intergovernmental Relations Division of OPM, is uniquely structured to provide a forum for state and local policy leaders to develop initiatives for state/municipal efficiencies. Currently, ACIR consists of 16 appointments representing state government, municipal government and has appointments from each major party and the governor. This proposal would:

- Add a member to the Commission representing the Regional Education Service centers (RECS);
- Require ACIR to annually develop priorities and focus areas for grants issued to regional councils of governments in accordance with Section 1-124s (Regional Performance Incentive Program) of the General Statutes;
- Submit to the General Assembly a report recommending actions to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of services either at the municipal or state level; and
- Simplify the current municipal mandate reporting and require that reports be done electronically

**2. Modify Section 4-124p of the General Statutes to enable regional councils of governments to borrow funds in the same manner that municipalities, regional education resource centers and regional transit districts are permitted to do**

Currently, regional councils of governments may purchase property and may receive grants. They cannot borrow monies or issue bonds. Such authority would, for those regions wishing to do so, explore more regional projects - including regional infrastructure (sewer, roads, etc).

**3. Create new law that would minimize the issues related to labor contracts and related matter when public services are merged and/or consolidated**

Current law provides no mechanism for the merger or blending of multiple unionized and/or non unionized workers as part of a regionalization of municipal services. Providing for such a transition would remove a significant barrier to the regionalization of services resulting in greater efficiencies and savings. The attached language is based on recently enacted legislation in New Jersey.

**4. Enable Two or more contiguous municipalities for the creation of a Municipal Consolidation Study Commission**

Should one or more towns wish to explore the possibility of consolidation there is currently no mechanism in statute for such an undertaking. This proposal, based on New Jersey law, sets forth a formal process for municipal consolidation.

**5. Modify Section 2-79 to change current practice whereby the state Department of Transportation requires federal funds for local projects and then distributes them through each region to one where each COG receives the funds directly for use in their respective region**

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This proposed change would eliminate one administrative step and move funds closer to where they are actually used.

**6. Modify Section 7-137 to enable large municipalities (75,000 or more persons) to act as sub-regions for purposes of economic development**

The intent of this proposal is to enable Connecticut's largest cities to develop sub-regional economic development commissions with the city (place with more than 75,000 persons) as the hub of such a group.

**7. Modify Section 32-326/327/328 regarding the Regional Economic Development Act**

This modification would tie economic development to a region's CEDS and broaden the change of initiatives under the Act.

**8. Develop an Efficiency Rating System for the distribution of public transportation funds.**

School bus transportation is among the largest costs incurred by school districts. Washington state, in 2011, adopted an evaluation system for student transportation operations within each school district. The goal of the system is to encourage school districts to operate their student transportation systems in a manner that makes efficient use of state resources. The statistical system used to create the efficiency ratings is called the Target Resource Model (TRM). For districts rated at less than 100 percent efficient, TRM creates a statistical "target district" from actual school districts across the state that have environmental features, size characteristics and workload requirements that are the same or more challenging and compares the district's total transportation costs and the number of buses used with this "target." The target district establishes the expected resource requirements (expenditures and number of buses) that would be needed to achieve a 100 percent efficiency score.

**9. Amend Sections 4-66g, 4-66h, 4-66m, 32-329, 8-387 and other discretionary grants currently only available to municipalities.**

This modification would enable towns, through their respective regional council of governments to apply for state funds as a region - promoting better coordination of funds between towns and fostering regional solutions.

**10. Modify Section 4-72 to require the governor to identify regional initiatives in each budget presentation**

Statutorily the governor is required to prepare the proposed budget in accordance with specific elements as defined in statute. This proposal would require an explanation of program changes for regionalization.

**11. Support the federal recognition of regional councils of governments as county equivalents for the state of Connecticut**

It is widely known that Connecticut differs from most states in the absence of county government. What is not widely known, however, is that the federal government is willing to recognize alternative forms of regional governance in states that lack formal county government. The U.S. Census Bureau terms these entities "county equivalents." County equivalents take a variety of institutional forms; what unites them is that they are treated as counties by the Census Bureau and all federal agencies that use census geographies. What this means in practice is that a) the census aggregates data for these regions, and, crucially, b) the regions are treated as eligible applicants and recipients for the 80 percent of federal grant programs that are open to counties. Perhaps because of these advantages, more than 100 county equivalents exist nationwide.

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Nationwide, federal grants to counties and county equivalents total over \$20 billion annually. While local governments can apply to many of these programs, Connecticut municipalities may not be well positioned to compete against metropolitan and county governments in other states. While Connecticut's regions can and do assist their members in grant preparation, we are unable to submit some grants to the federal government as a region. This may put the state and its municipalities at a competitive disadvantage, and poses an obstacle to the implementation of regional services. (Without direct access to federal grantors, municipalities cannot regionally consolidate federal grants for existing services, nor apply as a COG for grants to support new regional services.)

These concerns are not theoretical. Connecticut pays more federal taxes per capita than all but two states yet receives \$70 less per capita from the federal government than the average state. The lack of federal transfers to county governments or equivalents accounts for two-thirds (\$45) of this difference. Federal recognition of Connecticut's regions as county equivalents would create additional vehicles for grants and over time could bring significant new federal funds into the state.

Federal agencies defer to the Census Bureau to identify political subdivisions for grant eligibility. These subdivisions include counties and county equivalents, which the Census Bureau identifies through use of internally-developed criteria. At present, regional governments in six states fit these criteria and are officially considered county equivalents. However, Census Bureau staff have stated they are willing to initiate a process, on request, to revise the criteria to include regional governments in other states without county government. In the case of Connecticut, whose General Assembly has already enabled COGs to act as counties for federal purposes, no state legislative action is required. According to Census Bureau staff, the only action necessary from the state would be a formal request by the state's executive to initiate the criteria change process. This is why we are writing you—to ask that you request that the Census Bureau begin a criteria change that would result in Connecticut's COGs being treated as counties at the federal level, bringing federal policy in line with state law. County equivalency offers a real opportunity to build capacity at the regional level, support cost-saving innovative approaches, and provide additional revenue to the state.

**12. Recommend that the General Assembly establish a new select committee on region-based shared services to promote and facilitate the implementation of initiatives by groups of municipalities, by boards of education and councils of government**

The establishment of a "special" legislative committee to address a critical issue of policy and administration that crosses traditional jurisdictional lines of existing standing committees is an important and appropriate device for legislative leadership to signal that it seeks to place a laser-like focus on moving the new issue forward, including relying on a hybrid procedure that avoids the pitfalls of multiple committee referrals and of "orphan ownership" status. Since the end of the M.O.R.E. Commission, there has not been a standing legislative entity responsible for promoting legislation to expand shared service region-based initiatives.

In the past, leadership has established both "standing" and "select" new committees to generate interest in new legislative initiatives. That's why since just 1987 we now have committees on Commerce, Aging, Children, Higher Education and Employment, Housing and Veterans Affairs. In addition, the jurisdiction of the former Energy Committee was expanded to Energy and Technology as telephone deregulation and IT issues took center stage in the 1990s.

**13. Modify Section 8-384 to enable regional housing councils to be a subset of regional councils of governments**

Currently the state has authorized "regional" housing councils. This proposal would consolidate such councils into nine which would be the same geographically as the COGs. It would add a requirement that each regional housing council act in accordance with the Connecticut Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development, Connecticut Plan of Conservation and Development, Regional Plan of



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Conservation and Development for the region covered by the regional council of governments. The proposal also adds a requirement that housing councils assist groups with housing redevelopment as well as development.

**14. Modify Section 8-387 to allow COGs Housing Infrastructure Fund**

This initiative would enable COGs to access this fund for housing.

**15. Modify Section 32-328 to allow that a region may apply for financial assistance**

This initiative would enable COGs to access this fund for housing.

**16. Modify Section 8-3 to change the appointing authority for ZEOs from zoning commissions to the town itself**

Current law hinders the ability of non-charter towns to operate their towns in an efficient manner. In the case of the ZEO with the appointment in the control of the zoning commission and the employment being a responsibility of the town - a place of confusion and conflict results that should be corrected.

**17. Amend Section 29-260 regarding the appointment of a building official**

Current law requires that a local building official be appointed for a four year period of time. The statute further delineates the manner in which a building official may be removed. The current system works against efforts to consolidate and/or regionalize this service. There is currently no reasonable purpose to justify the system for removal of a building official in current statute.

**18. Amend Section 29-297 regarding the appointment and/or replacement of a local fire marshal**

The proposed change makes the chief executive officer of a town the appointing authority of a local fire marshal.

The suggested statutory changes will allow greater municipal cooperation and the overall enhancement of regional approaches. It provides real opportunity for significant savings. The real opportunity is to be aspirational in thinking about the most responsive, transparent and, ultimately, the most efficient long term service delivery models for our state.

Whether it is state, regional or local service delivery, government should be aspirational. Innovation isn't just about cost savings, it is a statement - within our state, across the nation and the world that Connecticut embraces the generational change thinking about how, in this case, government services will be delivered.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

For more Information:

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Attachments:

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- Attachment A - Alex Knopp Testimony
- Attachment B - Connecticut Fragmentation
- Attachment C - Proposed Legislative Language

Attachment A - Alex Knopp Testimony

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**TESTIMONY OF ALEX KNOPP  
COMMISSION ON FISCAL STABILITY AND ECONOMIC GROWTH  
JANUARY 24, 2018**

**203-554-7307**

**[alex.knopp@yale.edu](mailto:alex.knopp@yale.edu) [aknopp@sbcglobal.net](mailto:aknopp@sbcglobal.net)**

**VI. RECOMMEND THAT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ESTABLISH A NEW  
SELECT COMMITTEE ON REGION-BASED SHARED SERVICES TO  
PROMOTE AND FACILITATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INITIATIVES  
BY GROUPS OF MUNICIPALITIES, BY BOARDS OF EDUCATION AND BY  
COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENT**

The establishment of a “special” legislative committee to address a critical issue of policy and administration that crosses traditional jurisdictional lines of existing standing committees is an important and appropriate device for legislative leadership to signal that it seeks to place a laser-like focus on moving the new issue forward, including relying on a hybrid procedure that avoids the pitfalls of multiple committee referrals and of “orphan ownership” status.

Since the end of the M.O.R.E. Commission, there has not been a standing legislative entity responsible for promoting legislation to expand shared service region-based initiatives.

In the past, leadership has established both “standing” and “select” new committees to generate interest in new legislative initiatives. That’s why since just 1987 we now have committees on Commerce, Aging, Children, Higher Education and Employment, Housing and Veterans Affairs. In addition, the jurisdiction of the former Energy Committee was expanded to Energy and Technology as telephone deregulation and IT issues took center stage in the 1990s.

It’s time for a new legislative committee to carry on the work of the M.O.R.E. Commission in step with the regional initiatives now underway in many of the COGS, as more fully described by the excellent and comprehensive testimony yesterday of leaders from CRCOG, NECOG, CCM, COST and others.

As one possible model, a new Select Joint Committee on Region-Based Shared Services could be formed from co-chairs and ranking members or their designees of the Planning and Development, Finance, Appropriations, Government Administration and Elections, Housing, Labor and others to be co-chaired by a Deputy Speaker and a Deputy Minority Leader who would be empowered to recommend new enabling statutes and other legislation directly to the floor of the House and Senate for action without the death-knell of multiple referrals.

The goal for this Commission ought to be to encourage the creation of a legislative entity to vigorously investigate, promote, oversee and recommend region-based policy initiatives to realize potential services savings and increase efficiencies.

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## Attachment B - Connecticut Fragmentation

1 State, 3.5 million people, 5,500 sq. miles - 169 Towns - 8 Major Watersheds -  
 831 Census Tracts - 2,618 Census Blocks - 8 counties - 117 cities, CDPs or boroughs - 5 Congressional District - 36 State  
 Senate Districts - 151 State House District - 310 Zip Codes - 9 Urbanized Areas - 8 Urban Clusters - 6 Core Based Statistical  
 Areas - 14 Regional Planning Organizations, including: 9 Councils of Governments, 2 Councils of Elected Officials, and 3 Planning  
 Agencies - 13 Regional Planning Commissions - 169 Public Works Departments - 11 Metropolitan Planning Regions - 4 Rural  
 Planning Regions - 4 DOT Service Regions - 10 Transit Districts - 6 CT Transit Divisions - 6 Library Association Regions - 4 Water  
 Utility Coordinating Committees - 2 Resource Conservation and Development Regions - 7 Soil and Water Conservation Districts - 3  
 Water Authorities - 169 Tax Collectors - 169 Municipal assessors - 3 Regional Animal Control Programs - 5 Conservation Districts -  
 8 UCONN Cooperative Extension System Regions - 13 DEEP Deer Management Areas - 3 DEEP Migrant Goose Zones - 2 DEEP  
 Districts - 3 DEEP Law Enforcement Districts - 5 Emergency management and Homeland Security Regions - 109 Public Safety  
 Answering Points (PSAPS) - 7 Regional PSAPS - 9 multi-town PSAPS - 82 municipal PSAPS -  
 10 State Police Regions - 13 Judicial Districts - 22 Judicial Branch Areas - 54 Probate Courts  
 - 282 Fire Districts - 5 Workforce Development Boards - 9 Labor market Areas - 17 CTWorks  
 Career Centers - 5 Department of Labor Field Audit Offices - 9 Department of Labor  
 Unemployment Adjudication's Offices - 3 Department of Developmental Services Regions  
 - 3 Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services Regions - 12 Department of Mental  
 Health and Addiction Services Sub-Regions - 12 Community Action Agencies - 6 Regional  
 Education Service Centers - 1 Regional Reevaluation Program - 43 Elementary School Districts - 156 Secondary School Districts -  
 17 Regional School Districts - 8 DECD Service Delivery Areas - 26 part-time Municipal Health Directors - 34 full-time Municipal  
 Health Departments - 20 Regional Health Departments - 5 Emergency Medical Councils - 25 Regional Hospitals - 37 Community  
 Health Centers - 3 Tourism Regions - 227 Fire Departments - 8 Regions with a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy  
 (CEDs) - 4 State Economic Development Districts - 3 Resource Recovery Agencies - 5 Area Agencies on Aging - 3 Department of  
 Social Services Regions - 1 Regional paramedic Program - 7 Department of Agriculture Animal Control Regions - 25 Connecticut  
 Community Collaborative Regions for Children and Families - 6 Department of Children and Families Regions - 3 Long-Term Care  
 Ombudsman Program Regions - 6 Connecticut Wraparound Initiative Regions - 24 CATV Franchise Regions - 13 Community  
 Colleges - 4 State Universities - 18 Independent Colleges/Universities - 5 Mental Health and Addiction Services Regions - 24 Motor  
 Vehicle Locations - 6 USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Offices - 2 USDA Rural Development - 4 CL&P Service Areas -  
 15 United Way Regions

## Attachment C - Proposed Statutory Changes

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Please note, the following are suggested modifications to current law. Language to be deleted is shown in red with a strikethrough and new language is in blue

### 1. **Modify Section 2-27 of the General Statutes regarding the charge and membership of the Connecticut Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations**

Subsection (a) of section 2-79 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*): (a) There shall be a Connecticut Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations. The purpose of the commission shall be to enhance coordination and cooperation between the state and local governments. The commission shall consist of the president pro tempore of the Senate, the speaker of the House of Representatives, the minority leader of the Senate, the minority leader of the House of Representatives, the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, the Commissioners of Education, Energy and Environmental Protection, Economic and Community Development, or their designees, and ~~sixteen~~ **seventeen** additional members as follows: (1) Six municipal officials appointed by the Governor, four of whom shall be selected from a list of nominees submitted to him by the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities and two of whom shall be selected from a list submitted by the Council of Small Towns. Two of such six officials shall be from towns having populations of twenty thousand or less persons, two shall be from towns having populations of more than twenty thousand but less than sixty thousand persons and two shall be from towns having populations of sixty thousand or more persons; (2) two local public education officials appointed by the Governor, one of whom shall be selected from a list of nominees submitted to him by the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education and one of whom shall be selected from a list submitted by the Connecticut Association of School Administrators; (3) one representative of a regional council of governments appointed by the Governor from a list of nominees submitted to him by the ~~Regional Planning Association of Connecticut~~ **Connecticut Association of Council of Governments**; (4) five persons who do not hold elected or appointed office in state or local government, one of whom shall be appointed by the Governor, one of whom shall be appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of whom shall be appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be appointed by the minority leader of the Senate and one of whom shall be appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives; (5) one representative of the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities appointed by said conference; **(1) representative of the Regional Education Service Centers appointed by said group** and (6) one representative of the Council of Small Towns appointed by said council. Each member of the commission appointed pursuant to subdivisions (1) to (6), inclusive, of this subsection shall serve for a term of two years. All other members shall serve for terms which are coterminous with their terms of office. The Governor shall appoint a chairperson and a vice-chairperson from among the commission members. Members of the General Assembly may serve as gubernatorial appointees to the commission. Members of the commission shall not be compensated for their services but shall be reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

(b) The commission shall: (1) Serve as a forum for consultation among state and local government officials; (2) conduct research on intergovernmental issues; (3) encourage and coordinate studies of intergovernmental issues by universities, research and consulting organizations and others; (4) initiate policy development and make recommendations for consideration by all levels and branches of government **regarding the efficiencies of state and local services and other related issues**; (5) **annually develop priorities and focus areas for grants issued to regional councils of governments in accordance with Section 1-124s of the General Statutes**. The commission shall issue, from time to time, public reports of its findings and recommendations and shall issue, annually, a public report on its activities.

(c) On or before October 1, 2019 and every four years thereafter, **or as the commission deems warranted**, the commission shall submit to the General Assembly a report **recommending actions to enhance the efficiency in the delivery of services either at the municipal or state level and** which lists each existing state mandate, as defined in



subsection (a) of section 2-32b, and which (1) categorizes each mandate as constitutional, statutory or executive, (2) provides the date of original enactment or issuance along with a brief description of the history of the mandate, and (3) analyzes the costs incurred by local governments in implementing the mandate. In each report the commission may also make recommendations on state mandates for consideration by the commission. ~~On and after October 1, 1996,~~ the report shall be submitted to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to appropriations and budgets of state agencies, **planning and development**, to any other joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance and, upon request, to any member of the General Assembly. A summary of the report shall be submitted **electronically** to each member of the General Assembly ~~if the summary is two pages or less and a notification of the report shall be submitted to each member if the summary is more than two pages.~~ Submission shall be by **electronic** mailing the report, summary or notification to the legislative address of each member of the committees or the General Assembly, as applicable. The provisions of this subsection shall not be construed to prevent the commission from making more frequent recommendations **on the efficient delivery of state and or municipal services or** state mandates.

~~(d) Commencing on or before the second Wednesday after the convening of the 1997 regular session of the General Assembly, and every year thereafter except a year in which a report is filed pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, the commission shall submit to the General Assembly a supplement to the report required in said subsection (c) identifying any new mandates adopted and any mandates changed in the previous year.~~

(e) The Office of Policy and Management shall provide such staff as is necessary for the performance of the functions and duties of the Connecticut Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations. Such persons may be exempt from the classified service.

## **2. Modify Section 4-124p of the General Statutes to enable regional councils of governments to borrow funds in the same manner that municipalities, regional education resource centers and regional transit districts are permitted to do**

Subsection (a) of Section 4-124p of the general statutes is repealed and replaced with the following (Effective on passage): Each regional council of governments established under the provisions of sections 4-124i to 4-124p, inclusive, **shall be a body corporate and politic. The board of a regional council of governments shall be a regional governance authority acting on behalf of the state of Connecticut and shall have the power to sue and be sued, to receive and disburse private funds and such prepaid and reimbursed federal, state and local funds as each member municipality may authorize on its own behalf, to employ personnel, to enter into contracts, to purchase, receive, hold and convey real and personal property and otherwise to provide the programs, services and activities agreed upon by the member municipalities. The board of a regional council of governments shall have authority, within the limits prescribed by this part and as specified by the written agreement of the member municipalities, to establish policies for the regional council of governments, to determine the programs and services to be provided, to employ staff including a director of the regional council of governments, to prepare and expend the budget and, within the limits authorized under this section, to provide for the financing of the programs and projects of the regional council of governments.** ~~is authorized to receive for its own use and purposes any funds from any source including the state and federal governments and including bequests, gifts and contributions made by any individual, corporation or association.~~ Any town, city or borough participating in a regional council of governments shall annually appropriate funds for the expenses of such council in the performance of its purposes. Such funds shall be appropriated and paid in accordance with a dues formula established by the regional council of governments. Such council may withhold any services it deems advisable from any town, city or borough which has failed to pay such dues. Within the amount so received, a council may engage employees, and contract with professional consultants, municipalities, the state and the federal governments, other regional councils of governments and other inter-town, regional or metropolitan agencies, or with any one or more of them, and may enter into contracts from time to time to carry out its purposes. Any such contract shall be approved by action of the regional council of governments in a manner prescribed by the council. The accounts of any regional council of governments shall be subject to an annual audit under the provisions of chapter 111 and such council shall file an annual report with the clerks of its member towns, cities or boroughs, with planning commissions, if any, of members, and with the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, or his designee.

(b) (NEW) For the purpose of carrying out or administering a regional council of governments project, program or other function authorized under this section or refinancing existing indebtedness or funding debt service reserve or project reserve funds, a regional council of governments may, without limiting its authority under other provisions of law, borrow temporarily in anticipation of receipt of current revenues and issue bonds, notes or other obligations payable from or secured by any one or more of the following: (1) A pledge, lien, mortgage or other security interest in any or all of the income, proceeds, revenues and property, real or personal, of its projects, assets, programs or other functions, including the proceeds of grants, loans, advances, guarantees or contributions from the federal government, state or any other source; or (2) a pledge, lien, mortgage or other security interest in the property, real or personal, of projects to be financed by the bonds, notes or other obligations.

(c) (NEW) Bonds, notes or other obligations issued under this section may be issued in one or more series, shall bear such date or dates, be in such form, mature at such time or times, be payable at such place or places whether within the state or without, bear interest at such rate or rates, be in such denominations and form, with coupons attached, or registered, be fully negotiable, contain such conversion and redemption provisions, such other terms, covenants and conditions and be issued and sold in such manner as the regional council of governments, by resolution of the board of such council, determines, and may be payable at such time or times not exceeding twenty years from the date of issuance. Such bonds, notes or other obligations shall not constitute an indebtedness within the meaning of any debt limitation or restrictions and shall not be obligations of the state of Connecticut or any municipality, and each such bond, note or other obligation shall so state on its face. Neither the officers or members of the board of any regional council of governments nor any person executing the bond, note or other obligations shall be personally liable thereon by reason of the issuance thereof.

(d) (NEW) A regional council of governments may issue notes in anticipation of the receipt of proceeds from the sale of such bonds. If such notes are issued, the provisions of sections 7-378 and 7-378a, relating to the terms and conditions of issuing and renewing such notes, shall apply.

(e) (NEW) Each pledge, agreement or assignment made for the benefit or security of any bonds, notes or other obligations issued under this section shall be in effect until the principal and interest on the bonds, notes or other obligations for the benefit of which the same were made have been fully paid, or until provision is made for the payment in the manner provided in the resolution or resolutions authorizing their issuance. Any pledge or assignment made in respect of such bonds, notes or other obligations secured thereby shall be valid and binding from the time when the pledge or assignment is made; any income, proceeds, revenues or property so pledged or assigned and thereafter received by the regional council of governments shall immediately be subject to the lien of such pledge, without any physical delivery thereof or further act; and the lien of any such pledge or assignment shall be valid and binding as against parties having claims of any kind in tort, contract or otherwise against the regional council of governments, irrespective of whether such parties have notice thereof. Neither the resolution, trust indenture, agreement, assignment or other instrument by which a pledge is created need be recorded or filed, except for the recording of any mortgage or lien on real property or on any interest in real property.

(f) (NEW) A regional council of governments may enter into contractual agreements, including trust indentures or agreements with trustees, for the collection, investment and payment of pledged or assigned income, proceeds, revenues or property, the establishment of reserves, covenants and agreements for the benefit of the trustee or the holders of any bonds, notes or other obligations, and such other terms and conditions which are reasonable to delineate the respective rights, duties, safeguards, responsibilities and liabilities of the regional council of governments, holders of bonds, notes or other obligations and the trustee or assignee. Any such agreement may provide for the pledge or assigning of any assets or income from assets to which or in which the center has rights or interest, the vesting in such trustee or trustees of such property, rights, powers and duties in trust as the center may determine, which may include any or all of the property, rights, powers and duties of any trustee appointed by the holders of any bonds, notes or other obligations, or limiting or restricting the rights of any holder of any bonds, notes or other obligations, or limiting or abrogating the right of the holders of any bonds, notes or other obligations to appoint a trustee, or limiting the rights, powers and duties of such trustee, and may further provide for such other rights and remedies exercisable by the trustee as may be proper for the



protection of the holders of any bonds, notes or other obligations and not otherwise in violation of law, including the acceleration of payment in the event of a default.

(g) (NEW) Any regional council of governments may obtain from a commercial bank or insurance company authorized to do business within or without this state a letter of credit, line of credit or other credit or liquidity facility, for the purpose of providing funds for the payment of such bonds, notes or other obligations required by their terms or by the holder thereof to be redeemed or repurchased at or prior to maturity or for providing additional security for such bonds, notes or other obligations. In connection therewith, a regional council of governments may authorize the execution of reimbursement agreements, remarketing agreements, standby bond purchase agreements, agreements for the purpose of moderating interest rate fluctuations and any other necessary or appropriate agreements. If a regional council of governments is required to draw upon any such credit facility, the amount of each loan made pursuant to such credit facility shall be repaid by the council as provided in such agreement with the provider of the credit facility, but no later than the last date on which the bond, notes or other obligations secured thereby would be required to mature by law. Such regional council of governments may pledge or assign or mortgage any of its income, proceeds, revenues or properties authorized by this section to secure its bonds, notes or other obligations to secure its payment obligations under any agreement entered into pursuant to this section.

(h) (NEW) Bonds, notes or other obligations issued by a regional council of governments under the provisions of this section are hereby made securities in which all public officers and public bodies of the state and its political subdivisions, all insurance companies, credit unions, building and loan associations, investment companies, savings banks, banking associations, trust companies, executors, administrators, trustees and other fiduciaries and pension, profit-sharing and retirement funds may properly and legally invest funds, including capital in their control or belonging to them. Such bonds are hereby made securities which may properly and legally be deposited with and received by any state or municipal officer or any agency or municipality of the state for any purpose for which the deposit of bonds or obligations of the state is now or may hereafter be authorized by law.

(i) (NEW) A regional council of governments shall be considered an agency of the state for purposes of subdivision (14) of subsection (d) of section 42a-9-109.

### **3. Create new law that would minimize the issues related to labor contracts and related matter when public services are merged and/or consolidated**

(NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) When two or more municipalities contract, through a regional council of governments, for a shared service using existing municipal public employees then the agreement shall include an employment reconciliation plan as described in subsection (b) of this act. Any such agreement shall recognize and preserve the seniority, tenure, and pension rights of every full-time employee who is employed by each of the participating local units and who is in good standing at the time the agreement is adopted, and none of those employees shall be terminated, except for cause; provided, however, this provision shall not be construed to prevent or prohibit a merged regional service entity from reducing its workforce as provided by law for reasons of economy and efficiency. Any shared service shall be deemed in furtherance of the public good and presumed valid, subject to a rebuttable presumption of good faith on the part of the governing bodies entering into the agreement.

(b) An employment reconciliation plan shall be subject to the following provisions: (1) a determination of those employees, if any, that shall be transferred to the regional council of governments, or terminated from employment for reasons of economy or efficiency, subject to the provisions of any existing collective bargaining agreements within the local municipal units; (2) any employee terminated for reasons of economy or efficiency by the regional council of governments providing the service under the shared service agreement shall be given a terminal leave payment of not less than a period of one month for each five-year period of past service as an employee with the local municipal unit, or other enhanced benefits that may be provided or negotiated. For the purposes of this section, "terminal leave payment" means a single, lump sum payment, paid at termination, calculated using the regular base salary at the time of termination. Unless otherwise negotiated or provided by the employer, a terminal leave benefit shall not include extended payment, or payment for retroactive salary increases,

bonuses, overtime, longevity, sick leave, accrued vacation or other time benefit, or any other benefit. In addition, a reconciliation plan shall address the following implementation issues: (1) a timetable to establish a timetable of significant events and goals to be achieved for implementing the consolidation plan; (2) duplicate positions, including those held by tenured, certified officers, listing those positions proposed to be abolished for reasons of economy, efficiency or other good cause and listing those positions proposed to be merged; variations from existing statutes or agency regulations that may not have anticipated a phase-in or consolidation of services. When variations are proposed, they shall be submitted to the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management who shall refer it to the agency with oversight responsibility. After due consideration, the responsible agency is empowered to waive such law or rules if a waiver is found reasonable to further the process of consolidation. Where no such agency exists, the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management shall act on behalf of the State. These requests shall be acted on within 45 days of their receipt by an agency, and they shall be deemed approved, subject to approval of a consolidation proposal by the municipalities, by the end of that time unless the agency has responded with a denial, conditions that must be met in order for it to be approved, or an alternative approach to resolving the matter; and the apportionment of any existing debt between the participating municipalities and the responsibility for pre-consolidation debts.

(c) Whenever a regional service is established through a regional council of governments that includes employees covered by one or more collective bargain agreements the terms and conditions of the existing contracts shall apply to the rights of the members of the respective bargaining units until a new contract is negotiated, reduced to writing, and signed by the parties as provided pursuant to law.

(d) An employment reconciliation plan shall be filed with the Commissioner of the Department of Labor prior to the approval of the shared service agreement. The department shall review it for consistency with this section within 45 days of receipt and it shall be deemed approved, subject to approval of the shared service agreement by the end of that time, unless the department has responded with a denial or conditions that must be met in order for it to be approved.

#### **4. Enable Two or more contiguous municipalities for the creation of a Municipal Consolidation Study Commission**

(NEW) *(Effective from passage)* (a) Two or more contiguous municipalities may petition the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management for the creation of a Municipal Consolidation Study Commission,. The petition, to be sufficient, shall be signed by the chief elected official and the registered and qualified voters of the municipalities in a number at least equal to 10% of the total votes cast in those municipalities at the last preceding general election at which members of the General Assembly were elected.

(b) The Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management shall provide application forms and technical assistance to any municipality desiring to apply to the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management for approval of a consolidation plan or the creation of a Municipal Consolidation Study Commission.

(c) An application to create a Municipal Consolidation Study Commission shall propose a process to study the feasibility of consolidating the participating municipalities into a single new municipality or merging one into the other. The application shall include provisions for (1) the means of selection and qualifications of study commissioners; (2) the timeframe for the study, which shall be no more than three years, along with key events and deadlines, including time for review of the report by State agencies, which review shall be no less than three months; (3) whether a preliminary report shall be issued in addition to the final report; (4) whether the development of a consolidation implementation plan will be a part of the study; (5) the means for any proposed consolidation plan to be approved; either by voter referendum, by the governing bodies, or both; and (6) if proposed by a representative group of voters, justification of that group's standing to serve as the community advocate for the consolidation proposal.

(d) An application to the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management for consideration of a consolidation plan or to create a Municipal Consolidation Study Commission shall be subject to a public hearing

within each municipality to be studied, and a joint public hearing in a place that is easily accessible to the residents of both or all of the municipalities.

(e) After approval of a plan by the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, it may be amended upon petition to the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management by the applicant. Based on the nature of the amendment, the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management may decide to hold a public hearing in any of the municipalities affected by the plan, or at a regular meeting, or both.

(f) Every Municipal Consolidation Study Commission shall include a representative of the Office of Policy and Management as a non-voting representative on the commission and the executive director(s) of the regional councils of governments as a non-voting representative on the commission in which such municipalities are located. The representative shall not be a resident of a municipality participating in the study. The Office of Policy and Management shall prepare an objective fiscal study of the fiscal aspects of a consolidation and shall provide it to the commission in a timely manner. The regional councils of governments shall provide study commission staffing and relayed support.

(g) A consolidation plan or report of a Municipal Consolidation Study Commission shall include: (1) a timetable for implementing the consolidation plan; (2) duplicate positions, including those held by tenured, certified officers, listing those positions proposed to be abolished for reasons of economy, efficiency or other good cause and listing those positions proposed to be merged.

(h) The following policies may be considered and implemented under an application for approval of a consolidation plan, and may be included as part of a study: (1) creation of a consolidation implementation plan to establish a timetable of significant events and goals to be achieved as part of a consolidation study; (2) a phase-in of a consolidation over a fixed period of time. Such a plan shall be subject to review and approval of the Finance Board prior to it being approved by the governing bodies or subject to voter referendum; (3) variations from existing State law or State department rules that may not have anticipated a phase-in or consolidation of services. When variations are proposed, they shall be submitted to the board which shall refer it to the agency with oversight responsibility. After due consideration, the referee agency is empowered to waive such law or rules if a waiver is found reasonable to further the process of consolidation.

(i) The apportionment of existing debt between the taxpayers of the consolidating municipalities, including whether existing debt should be apportioned in the same manner as debt within special taxing districts so that the taxpayers of each consolidating municipality will continue to be responsible for their own pre-consolidation debts.

(j) Once a consolidation has been approved by the affected municipal governing bodies, the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management shall create a task force of State departments, offices and agencies, as it deems appropriate, and representatives of affected negotiations units, to facilitate the consolidation and provide technical assistance.

**5. Modify Section 2-79 to change current practice whereby the state Department of Transportation requires federal funds for local projects and then distributes them through each region to one where each COG receives the funds directly for use in their respective region**

Section 2-79 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*): (a) The Commissioner of Transportation shall establish a local transportation capital program to provide state funding, ~~in lieu of specific federal funding available, to any municipality or local planning agency~~ **regional councils of governments** for transportation improvements to any state or locally maintained roadway or facility that is deemed eligible for federal surface transportation ~~urban~~ program funding. ~~For the purposes of this program, project eligibility is extended to include local major and minor collector roads in rural areas. Regional Councils of Governments may waive the requirement of federal eligibility by a unanimous vote of such Council's municipal membership.~~

(b) The commissioner may request the authorization of special tax obligation bonds of the state to establish such state funding. In the absence of state funding in any year, specific and eligible federal transportation funding shall remain available to meet the needs of eligible local roads. Such bonds shall mature at such time or times not exceeding twenty years from their respective dates as may be provided in or pursuant to the resolution or resolutions of the State Bond Commission authorizing such bonds.

(c) ~~The Department of Transportation~~ Any regional council of governments shall accept and process eligible project applications ~~shall accept applications~~ for such state funding ~~from any eligible recipient~~, based on project priorities ~~through the appropriate~~ established by such regional council of governments. Any such state funding shall be provided to the recipient regional council of governments through guidelines developed by the Department of Transportation. The regional councils of governments shall be responsible for developing a financial plan and maintaining a program fiscal budget for their respective COG.

(d) A portion of such state funding shall be available to the regional councils of government to administer the program, including assisting member municipalities in the preparation of project applications.

(~~e~~) Any transportation improvement funded pursuant to the program established in this section will have a service life of approximately twenty years.

(~~e~~) Notwithstanding any other provision of the general statutes, this program, when improvements are on a locally owned roadway or facility, shall not be deemed to be a proposed state action, activity or critical activity for the purposes of sections 25-68b to 25-68h, inclusive.

## **6. Modify Section 7-137 to enable large municipalities (75,000 or more persons) to act as sub-regions for purposes of economic development**

Section 7-137 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective on passage*): Any two or more towns, cities or boroughs having economic development commissions may, by ordinance adopted by each of them, join in the formation of a ~~regional~~ cooperative economic development commission, provided at least one municipality joining such regional economic commission shall have a population of at least seventy-five thousand. The area of jurisdiction of the ~~regional~~ cooperative commission shall be coterminous with the area of the municipalities so joining. Any municipality which has joined in the formation of a ~~regional~~ cooperative commission may thereafter withdraw by the adoption of an ordinance to that effect. The economic development commissions of the municipalities comprising the ~~regional~~ cooperative commission shall jointly determine the membership of the ~~regional~~ cooperative commission. A ~~regional~~ cooperative commission shall have the same duties and authority, in respect to its area of jurisdiction, as a municipal commission has in respect to the municipality. Each municipality may annually appropriate to a ~~regional~~ cooperative commission a sum which, in addition to any amount appropriated to its municipal commission, will not exceed one-twentieth of one per cent of its last-completed grand list of taxable property.

## **7. Modify Section 32-326/327/328 regarding the Regional Economic Development Act**

Section 32-326 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective on passage*): (a) It is hereby found and declared that there exists in this state a great and growing need for additional public and private capital improvements and acquisitions and project development that will promote economic diversification, stability and growth; that such improvements, acquisitions and projects are a particularly effective investment of state funds because of their relative immobility in an increasingly global economy; that such improvements, acquisitions and projects are particularly needed in communities and regions experiencing significant military, commercial and industrial job losses and economic dislocation; and that regional cooperation in the planning and development of such improvements, acquisitions and projects is desirable and should be encouraged; and therefore, it is necessary and in the public interest and for the public good that the provisions of sections 32-325 to 32-330, inclusive, are hereby declared a matter of legislative determination.

Section Section 32-327 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective on passage*): As used in sections 32-325 to 32-330, inclusive, 32-23ww and 32-23xx:

(1) "Act" means the Regional Economic Development Act.

(2) "Agency" means any ~~regional economic development commission formed under sections 7-136 and 7-137, other regional development commission or corporation formed under any other provision of the general statutes or any special act,~~ [federal economic development district, established under 42 USC 3171](#) or any regional council of governments organized under sections 4-124i to 4-124p, inclusive, ~~except that for purposes of financial assistance for greenways projects, "agency" means a municipality or other organizations.~~

(3) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development.

(4) "Eligible project" means (A) a public or private improvement or acquisition which, ~~in the sole judgment of the commissioner~~ [as determined and declared in that region's comprehensive economic development strategy](#), will significantly enhance economic diversification, stability, growth or scientific knowledge in the region where the project is to be located, and includes a "business development project" as defined in subsection (a) of section 32-222 ~~or greenways projects~~ or (B) an application for a grant under section 32-23ww or 32-23xx. ~~(i) In determining eligibility with regard to an application submitted for an eligible project under subparagraph (A) of this subdivision before June 21, 1994, the commissioner shall also evaluate the project in accordance with a one-hundred-point scale as follows: Fifteen points based on such criteria as the commissioner may from time to time establish, fifteen points for projects located in targeted investment communities, up to twenty-five points for projects in regions where fifty per cent or more of the member municipalities within any planning region participate and fifteen points for every two thousand manufacturing jobs that the region has lost or, in the judgment of the commissioner, is scheduled to lose between July 1, 1989, and July 1, 1996, up to a total of forty-five points. (ii) In determining eligibility with regard to an application submitted for any eligible project under this subdivision on or after June 21, 1994, the commissioner shall also evaluate the project in accordance with a one-hundred-point scale as follows: Fifteen points based on such criteria as the commissioner may from time to time establish, fifteen points for projects located in targeted investment communities, up to twenty-five points for projects in regions where fifty per cent or more of the member municipalities within any planning region participate and fifteen points for every two thousand manufacturing jobs that the region has lost or, in the judgment of the commissioner, is scheduled to lose between July 1, 1989, and July 1, 1996, up to a total of twenty-five points, and ten points if the project consists of an application for a grant under section 32-23ww or 32-23xx, up to a total of twenty points.~~

(5) "Manufacturing jobs" means jobs at a business that is located, in whole or in part, in Connecticut and that has a North American Industrial Classification code of 311111 through 339999; a business engaged in research and development directly related to manufacturing; a business engaged in the significant servicing, overhauling or rebuilding of machinery and equipment for industrial use; [an agricultural enterprise engaged in value-added production or agricultural biotechnology](#); or any establishment or auxiliary or operating unit thereof, as defined in the North American Industrial Classification Manual, which the commissioner determines will materially contribute to the economy of the state by creating or retaining jobs, exporting products or services beyond the state's boundaries, encouraging innovation in products or services, adding value to products or services, or otherwise supporting or enhancing existing activities that are important to the economy of the state.

(6) "Eligible project cost" means the total cost in dollars of an eligible project.

(7) "Financial assistance" means grants, extensions of credit, loans, other investments, or guarantees of any of the foregoing, or any combination thereof, or any guaranty of any pool of such loans determined by the commissioner to be necessary or appropriate to establish or maintain a secondary market for such loans.

(8) "Regional economic development plan" means [a comprehensive economic development plan prepared in accordance with 13 CFR 303.7](#) ~~plan prepared by an agency that identifies, and which may rank, in order of priority, eligible projects for which the agency intends to apply for financial assistance under section 32-325, and includes an economic development plan developed as contemplated by section 32-7.~~ [federal economic development district, established under 42 USC 3171 or any regional council of governments](#)

(9) "Planning region" means any ~~planning region of the state recognized by the commissioner and established in connection with the development of any regional economic development plan~~ [federal economic development district, established under 42 USC 3171 or any regional council of governments](#)

Section 32-328 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective on passage): (a) ~~An agency~~ [A region](#) may apply for financial assistance under this section by submitting ~~a regional economic development plan~~ [one or more projects as contained in that region's comprehensive economic](#)

development strategy to the commissioner, with a request for financial assistance ~~for one or more projects identified in the plan.~~ The commissioner may also propose eligible projects, in amounts not to exceed one-third of the funds available under sections 32-325 to 32-330, inclusive, for financial assistance under this section, after submitting such proposal to the ~~agencies within the planning~~ region in which the project is to be located and consulting with such agencies as to the appropriateness of such project under ~~any applicable regional economic development plan~~ that region's comprehensive economic development strategy.

(b) The commissioner may fund not more than ninety per cent of total project costs ~~in targeted investment communities, not more than seventy-five per cent of total project costs in the case of~~ a project in a region that includes a targeted investment community or federally distressed community ~~or~~ and not more than sixty-six and two-thirds per cent of total project costs in the case of a project in a region that does not include a targeted investment community.

~~(c) Financial assistance may be provided to municipalities and other organizations to develop greenways, including, but not limited to, transportation-related greenways supported by the federal Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, as amended from time to time. The amount of any grant shall be as follows: (1) For transportation greenways projects that are part of interstate greenways, not more than twenty per cent of the project cost; (2) for transportation greenways projects that are local spurs from interstate greenways or that are inter-town greenways projects, not more than ten per cent of the project cost; and (3) for greenways that are not transportation greenways, not more than half of the capital costs of the project.~~

(d) The total financial assistance under sections 32-325 to 32-330, inclusive, for any ~~agency or project~~ region shall not exceed twenty million dollars of state funds plus any federal funds that the commissioner or the region applies to the project.

**9. Amend Sections 4-66g, 4-66h, 32-329, 8-387 and other discretionary grants currently only available to municipalities.**

Subsection (b) of Section 4-66g of the general statutes is repealed and replaced with the following (Effective on passage): (b) The proceeds of the sale of said bonds, to the extent of the amount stated in subsection (a) of this section, shall be used by the Office of Policy and Management for a small town economic assistance program the purpose of which shall be to provide grants-in-aid to any municipality or ~~group of municipalities~~ regional council of governments, provided the municipality and each participating municipality that is part of a ~~group of municipalities~~ regional council of governments is not economically distressed within the meaning of subsection (b) of section 32-9p, does not have an urban center in any plan adopted by the General Assembly pursuant to section 16a-30 and is not a public investment community within the meaning of subdivision (9) of subsection (a) of section 7-545. Such grants shall be used for purposes for which funds would be available under section 4-66c. No ~~group of municipalities~~ regional council of governments may receive an amount exceeding in the aggregate five hundred thousand dollars per participating municipality in such ~~group~~ region in any one fiscal year under said program. No individual municipality may receive more than five hundred thousand dollars in any one fiscal year under said program, except that any municipality that receives a grant under said program as a member of a ~~group of municipalities~~ regional council of governments shall continue to be eligible to receive an amount equal to five hundred thousand dollars less the amount of such participating municipality's proportionate share of such grant. Notwithstanding the provisions of this subsection and section 4-66c, a municipality that is (1) a distressed municipality within the meaning of subsection (b) of section 32-9p or a public investment community within the meaning of subdivision (9) of subsection (a) of section 7-545, and (2) otherwise eligible under this subsection for the small town economic assistance program may elect to be eligible for said program individually or as part of a ~~group of municipalities~~ regional council of governments in lieu of being eligible for financial assistance under section 4-66c, by a vote of its legislative body or, in the case of a municipality in which the legislative body is a town meeting, its board of selectmen, and submitting a written notice of such vote to the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management. Any such election shall be for the four-year period following submission of such notice to the secretary and may be extended for additional four-year periods in accordance with the same procedure for the initial election.

Section 4-66h of the general statutes is repealed and replaced with the following (Effective on passage): (a) There is established an account to be known as the "Main Street Investment Fund account" which shall be a

separate, non-lapsing account within the General Fund. The account shall contain any moneys required by law to be deposited in the account. Moneys in the account shall be expended by the Department of Housing for the purposes of providing grants not to exceed five hundred thousand dollars to municipalities with populations of not more than thirty thousand ~~or~~, municipalities eligible for the small town economic assistance program pursuant to section 4-66g for eligible projects as defined in subsection (d) of this section ~~or regional councils of governments~~. Municipalities ~~or regional councils of governments~~ shall apply for such grants in a manner to be determined by the Commissioner of Housing. Said commissioner may contract with a nonprofit entity to administer the provisions of this section.

(b) In awarding such grants, the commissioner shall determine that an eligible project advances the municipality's ~~or region's~~ approved plan pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection (d) of this section. Such advancements may include, but need not be limited to, ~~zoning and design guideline development~~; facade or awning improvements; sidewalk improvements or construction; street lighting; building renovations, including mixed use of residential and commercial; landscaping and development of recreational areas and greenspace; bicycle paths; and other improvements or renovations deemed by the commissioner to contribute to the economic success of the municipality.

(c) A grant received pursuant to this section shall be used for improvements to property owned by the municipality ~~or participating municipalities~~, except the municipality ~~or regional councils of governments~~ may use a portion of the proceeds of such grant to provide a one-time reimbursement to owners of commercial private property for eligible expenditures that directly support and enhance an eligible project. The maximum allowable reimbursement for such eligible expenditures to any such owner shall be fifty thousand dollars, to be provided at the following rates: (1) Expenditures equal to or less than fifty thousand dollars shall be reimbursed at a rate of fifty per cent, and (2) any additional expenditures greater than fifty thousand dollars but less than or equal to one hundred fifty thousand dollars shall be reimbursed at a rate of twenty-five per cent.

(d) For the purposes of this section:

(1) "Eligible expenditures" include expenses for ~~planning~~, cosmetic and structural exterior building improvements, signage, lighting and landscaping that is visible from the street, including, but not limited to, exterior painting or surface treatment, decorative awnings, window and door replacements or modifications, storefront enhancements, irrigation, streetscape, outdoor patios and decks, exterior wall lighting, decorative post lighting and architectural features, but do not include (A) any renovations that are solely the result of ordinary repair and maintenance, (B) improvements that are required to remedy a health, housing or safety code violation, or (C) nonpermanent structures, furnishings, movable equipment or other nonpermanent amenities. Eligible expenditures also include reasonable administrative expenses incurred by a nonprofit entity ~~or regional councils of governments~~ contracted with by the Department of Housing to implement the provisions of this section.

(2) "Eligible projects" means projects that are part of a plan previously approved by the governing body of the municipality ~~or regional councils of governments~~ to develop or improve town commercial centers to attract small businesses, promote commercial viability, and improve aesthetics and pedestrian access.

Section 4-66m of the general statutes is repealed and replaced with the following (Effective on passage): (a) For the purposes described in subsection (b) of this section, the State Bond Commission shall have the power, from time to time to authorize the issuance of bonds of the state in one or more series and in principal amounts not exceeding in the aggregate five million dollars.

(b) The proceeds of the sale of said bonds, to the extent of the amount stated in subsection (a) of this section, shall be used by the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management for the purpose of providing grants-in-aid under the inter-town capital equipment purchase incentive program established pursuant to subsection (c) of this section.

(c) (1) There is established an inter-town capital equipment purchase incentive program to provide grants to municipalities to jointly acquire ~~or regional councils of governments for participating towns in their regions to~~



acquire, on and after October 1, 2011, by purchase or by lease, equipment and vehicles necessary to the performance or delivery of a required governmental function or service.

(2) Grant funds may be used for acquisition costs of (A) equipment with an anticipated remaining useful life of not less than five years from the date of purchase or entry into a lease, including, but not limited to, data processing equipment that has a unit price of less than one thousand dollars, that a municipality or region covered by a regional council of governments uses in the performance or delivery of a required governmental function or service, and (B) a maintenance vehicle, pick-up truck, tractor, truck tractor or utility trailer, as each said term is defined in section 14-1, or any other similar type of vehicle that a municipality or region covered by a regional council of governments uses in the performance or delivery of a required governmental function or service. Each grant shall be not more than eighty per cent of the total acquisition cost of such equipment or vehicle, or three hundred seventy-five thousand dollars, whichever is less.

(3) Not later than September 1, 2011, the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management shall develop guidelines to establish (A) the procedures to apply for and the administration of the inter-town capital equipment purchase incentive program, (B) criteria for the expenditure of grant funds and the method of allocation of a grant among the municipalities or regional councils of governments that jointly acquire or lease equipment or a vehicle set forth in subdivision (2) of this subsection, and (C) prioritization for the awarding of grants pursuant to this section, including, but not limited to, any limits in a given time frame on (i) the number of times a municipality may apply, or (ii) the dollar amount of grant funds a municipality may receive, pursuant to this section.

(4) Not later than October 1, 2011, and annually thereafter, the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management shall publish a notice of grant availability and solicit proposals for funding under the inter-town capital equipment purchase incentive program. Municipalities or regional councils of governments eligible for such funding pursuant to the guidelines developed under subdivision (3) of this subsection may file applications for such funding at such times and in such manner as the secretary prescribes. The secretary shall review all grant applications and make determinations as to which acquisitions to fund and the amount of grants to be awarded in accordance with the guidelines developed under subdivision (3) of this subsection.

## **10. Modify Section 4-72 to require the governor to identify regional initiatives in each budget presentation**

Section 4-72 of the general statutes is repeated and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective on passage): (a) The budget document shall consist of the Governor's budget message in which he or she shall set forth as follows: (1) The Governor's program for meeting all the expenditure needs of the government for each fiscal year of the biennium to which the budget relates, indicating the classes of funds, general or special, from which such appropriations are to be made and the means through which such expenditure shall be financed; and (2) financial statements giving in summary form: (A) The financial position of all major state operating funds including revolving funds at the end of the last-completed fiscal year in a form consistent with accepted accounting practice. The Governor shall also set forth in similar form the estimated position of each such fund at the end of the year in progress and the estimated position of each such fund at the end of each fiscal year of the biennium to which the budget relates if the Governor's proposals are put into effect; (B) a statement showing as of the close of the last-completed fiscal year, a year by year summary of all outstanding general obligation and special tax obligation debt of the state and a statement showing the yearly interest requirements on such outstanding debt; (C) a summary of appropriations recommended for each fiscal year of the biennium to which the budget relates for each budgeted agency and for the state as a whole in comparison with actual expenditures of the last-completed fiscal year and appropriations and estimated expenditures for the year in progress; (D) for the biennium commencing July 1, 1999, and each biennium thereafter, a summary of estimated expenditures for certain fringe benefits for each fiscal year of the biennium to which the budget relates for each budgeted agency; (E) a summary of permanent full-time positions setting forth the number filled and the number vacant as of the end of the last-completed fiscal year, the total number intended to be funded by appropriations without reduction for turnover for the fiscal year in progress, the total number requested and the total number recommended for each fiscal year of the biennium to which the budget relates; (F) a statement of expenditures for the last-completed and current fiscal years, the agency request and the Governor's recommendation for each fiscal year of the ensuing biennium and, for any new or expanded program, estimated expenditure requirements for the fiscal



year next succeeding the biennium to which the budget relates; (G) an explanation of any significant program changes requested by the agency or recommended by the Governor; (H) [an explanation of any program changes for the regionalization of municipal or state supported services recommended by the Governor](#); (I) a summary of the revenue estimated to be received by the state during each fiscal year of the biennium to which the budget relates classified according to sources in comparison with the actual revenue received by the state during the last-completed fiscal year and estimated revenue during the year in progress; and (J) such other financial statements, data and comments as in the Governor's opinion are necessary or desirable in order to make known in all practicable detail the financial condition and operations of the government and the effect that the budget as proposed by the Governor will have on such condition and operations. If the estimated revenue of the state for the ensuing biennium as set forth in the budget on the basis of existing statutes is less than the sum of net appropriations recommended for the ensuing biennium as contained in the budget, plus, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014, and each fiscal year thereafter, the projected amount necessary to extinguish any unreserved negative balance in such fund as reported in the most recently audited comprehensive annual financial report issued by the Comptroller prior to the start of the biennium, the Governor shall make recommendations to the General Assembly in respect to the manner in which such deficit shall be met, whether by an increase in the indebtedness of the state, by the imposition of new taxes, by increased rates on existing taxes or otherwise. If the aggregate of such estimated revenue is greater than the sum of such recommended appropriations for the ensuing biennium plus, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014, and each fiscal year thereafter, the projected amount necessary to extinguish any unreserved negative balance in such fund as reported in the most recently issued annual report of the Comptroller published in accordance with section 3-115, the Governor shall make such recommendations for the use of such surplus for the reduction of indebtedness, for the reduction in taxation or for other purposes as in the Governor's opinion are in the best interest of the public welfare.

### **13. Modify Section 8-384 to enable regional housing councils to be a subset of regional councils of governments**

Section 8-384 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective on passage*): (a) There shall ~~continue to~~ be a regional housing council within each ~~planning-region~~ [regional council of governments](#) of the state, as designated under the provisions of section 16a-4a, which shall consist of not less than seven members of the public representing a fair cross-section of the region. The chairperson of each regional housing council shall be ~~appointed by the Governor and shall serve for a term coterminous with that of the Governor~~ [chosen by majority vote of the respective regional council of governments](#). Upon the resignation of any chairperson, ~~the Governor~~ [a majority vote of the respective regional council of governments shall](#) appoint a successor to serve as chairperson. The chairperson ~~with administrative support from the staff of the respective regional council of governments~~ shall organize each regional housing council and ~~appoint~~ [recommend to the regional council of governments](#) the members ~~thereof of the regional housing council~~, who shall serve at the pleasure of the ~~chairperson~~ [regional council of governments](#). If any vacancy occurs in the council, the chairperson shall ~~appoint~~ [recommend to the regional council of governments](#) a successor to fill such vacancy. If the Commissioner of Housing finds that a regional housing council has not been organized within a ~~recommend to the regional council of governments~~ [planning-region](#), he may designate ~~the regional council of governments or other another~~ entity to serve as the regional housing council for such region.

(b) Each regional housing council shall: (1) Strive for environmentally and economically sound and socially balanced development of affordable, equal opportunity housing in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations, [Connecticut Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development, Connecticut Plan of Conservation and Development, Regional Plan of Conservation and Development for the region covered by the regional council of governments](#) and [any regional or local housing](#) development plans [approved by the regional council of governments](#); (2) assist state, [regional](#) and local decision makers, housing sponsors and other participants in the development [and redevelopment](#) of housing in defining suitable approaches to providing for regional housing needs and identifying regional housing resources; (3) develop channels of communication between all levels of government, [the non-profit sector](#) and the producers and consumers of housing in order to assist in expediting existing processes for housing production ~~and or rehabilitation, in cooperation with regional councils of governments~~; (4) formulate and recommend measures designed to improve housing policies and

propose appropriate legislative [and regulatory](#) changes at the state or federal level [and zoning and ordinance changes at the local level](#); (5) review and evaluate state [and federal](#) housing programs and grants; (6) provide a forum for members of the public concerned with housing issues; (7) receive, review and comment on the housing needs ~~assessment transmitted to the council by the regional council of governments within its planning region of the region as part of the maintenance and update of the regional plan of conservation and development~~ as required by section 8-35a, provided the council shall transmit such comments to the Commissioner of Housing not later than thirty days after receiving the housing needs assessment and that the housing chapter of the regional plan of conservation and development shall also be forwarded to the Commissioner of Housing as part of the public hearing process for such plan in accordance with section 8-35a; and (8) ~~monitor housing-related activities of the regional council of governments within its region.~~

#### **14. Modify Section 8-387 to allow COGs Housing Infrastructure Fund**

Section 8-387 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective on passage*): (a) Housing Infrastructure Fund. State financial assistance to ~~municipalities regional councils of governments located in pilot program planning regions.~~ (a) There is established a fund to be known as the "Housing Infrastructure Fund". The fund shall contain any moneys required by law to be deposited therein and shall be held separate and apart from all other moneys, funds and accounts. Any balance remaining in the fund at the end of any fiscal year shall be carried forward in the fund for the fiscal year next succeeding. The fund may be used to make grants-in-aid, loans or deferred loans authorized by subsection (b) of this section.

(b) The state, acting by and in the discretion of the Commissioner of Housing, in consultation with the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, may enter into a contract to provide state financial assistance in the form of a grant-in-aid, loan, deferred loan or combination thereof to ~~municipalities regional councils of governments located within the planning regions in which the pilot program is established,~~ upon the approval of the regional fair housing compact as provided in section 8-386. In the case of a deferred loan, the contract shall require that payments on interest are due immediately but that payments on principal may be made at a later time. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (d) of section 4-86, funds appropriated to any state agency for payment to ~~local governments regional councils of governments~~ purposes related to or necessary for the development of housing in the ~~regions~~ , [regional councils of governments](#) but not limited to the purposes contained in this subsection, other than those for which distribution is governed by statutory formula, may be made available for the pilot program authorized under section 8-386 upon the recommendation of the Governor and approval of the Finance Advisory Committee. The grants-in-aid, loans, deferred loans or combinations thereof authorized under this subsection and any additional funds made available for the pilot program as provided in this subsection shall be used by the ~~municipalities regional councils of governments in said regions~~ for the purpose of planning, construction or renovation of housing and for any of the following when necessary to support the development of housing within such ~~municipalities regional councils of governments~~ in accordance with the regional fair housing compact: (1) Sanitary sewer lines, including interceptors, laterals and pumping stations; (2) natural gas, electric, telephone and telecommunications pipes, wires, conduits and other facilities and waterlines and water supply facilities, except for any such pipes, wires, conduits, waterlines or facilities which a public service company, as defined in section 16-1, a water company, as defined in section 25-32a, or a municipal utility is required to install pursuant to any provision of the general statutes, or any special act, a regulation or order of the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority or a certificate of public convenience and necessity; (3) storm drainage facilities, including facilities to control flooding; (4) public roadways and related appurtenances; (5) community septic systems approved by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, provided administrative costs directly related to such construction or renovation shall not exceed five per cent of the total grant or loan from the department. Such grants-in-aid, loans, deferred loans or combinations thereof shall be awarded in such amounts and upon such conditions as the commissioner, in consultation with the secretary, may prescribe by regulation except that no grant-in-aid, loan, or deferred loan or combination thereof shall be made to any municipality that has not approved a housing compact prepared under section 8-386.

## 15. Modify Section 32-328 to allow that a region may apply for financial assistance

Section 32-328 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective on passage): (a) ~~An agency~~ A region may apply for financial assistance under this section by submitting ~~a regional economic development plan one or more projects as contained in that region's comprehensive economic development strategy~~ to the commissioner, with a request for financial assistance ~~for one or more projects identified in the plan~~. The commissioner may also propose eligible projects, in amounts not to exceed one-third of the funds available under sections 32-325 to 32-330, inclusive, for financial assistance under this section, after submitting such proposal to the ~~agencies within the planning~~ region in which the project is to be located and consulting with such agencies as to the appropriateness of such project under ~~any applicable regional economic development plan~~ that region's comprehensive economic development strategy.

(b) The commissioner may fund not more than ninety per cent of total project costs ~~in targeted investment communities, not more than seventy five per cent of total project costs in the case of~~ a project in a region that includes a targeted investment community or federally distressed community ~~or~~ and not more than sixty-six and two-thirds per cent of total project costs in the case of a project in a region that does not include a targeted investment community.

~~(c) Financial assistance may be provided to municipalities and other organizations to develop greenways, including, but not limited to, transportation related greenways supported by the federal Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, as amended from time to time. The amount of any grant shall be as follows: (1) For transportation greenways projects that are part of interstate greenways, not more than twenty per cent of the project cost; (2) for transportation greenways projects that are local spurs from interstate greenways or that are inter-town greenways projects, not more than ten per cent of the project cost; and (3) for greenways that are not transportation greenways, not more than half of the capital costs of the project.~~

(d) The total financial assistance under sections 32-325 to 32-330, inclusive, for any ~~agency or project~~ region shall not exceed twenty million dollars of state funds plus any federal funds that the commissioner or the region applies to the project.

## 16. Modify Section 8-3 to change the appointing authority for ZEOs from zoning commissions to the town itself

Section 8-3 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (effective on passage): (a) Such zoning commission shall provide for the manner in which regulations under section 8-2 or 8-2j and the boundaries of zoning districts shall be respectively established or changed. No such regulation or boundary shall become effective or be established or changed until after a public hearing in relation thereto, held by a majority of the members of the zoning commission or a committee thereof appointed for that purpose consisting of at least five members. Such hearing shall be held in accordance with the provisions of section 8-7d. A copy of such proposed regulation or boundary shall be filed in the office of the town, city or borough clerk, as the case may be, in such municipality, but, in the case of a district, in the offices of both the district clerk and the town clerk of the town in which such district is located, for public inspection at least ten days before such hearing, and may be published in full in such paper. The commission may require a filing fee to be deposited with the commission to defray the cost of publication of the notice required for a hearing.

(b) Such regulations and boundaries shall be established, changed or repealed only by a majority vote of all the members of the zoning commission, except as otherwise provided in this chapter. In making its decision the commission shall take into consideration the plan of conservation and development, prepared pursuant to section 8-23, and shall state on the record its findings on consistency of the proposed establishment, change or repeal of such regulations and boundaries with such plan. If a protest against a proposed change is filed at or before a hearing with the zoning commission, signed by the owners of twenty per cent or more of the area of the lots included in such proposed change or of the lots within five hundred feet in all directions of the property included

in the proposed change, such change shall not be adopted except by a vote of two-thirds of all the members of the commission.

(c) All petitions requesting a change in the regulations or the boundaries of zoning districts shall be submitted in writing and in a form prescribed by the commission and shall be considered at a public hearing within the period of time permitted under section 8-7d. The commission shall act upon the changes requested in such petition. Whenever such commission makes any change in a regulation or boundary it shall state upon its records the reason why such change is made. No such commission shall be required to hear any petition or petitions relating to the same changes, or substantially the same changes, more than once in a period of twelve months.

(d) Zoning regulations or boundaries or changes therein shall become effective at such time as is fixed by the zoning commission, provided a copy of such regulation, boundary or change shall be filed in the office of the town, city or borough clerk, as the case may be, but, in the case of a district, in the office of both the district clerk and the town clerk of the town in which such district is located, and notice of the decision of such commission shall have been published in a newspaper having a substantial circulation in the municipality before such effective date. In any case in which such notice is not published within the fifteen-day period after a decision has been rendered, any applicant or petitioner may provide for the publication of such notice within ten days thereafter.

(e) The [zoning commission shall provide for the manner in which the zoning regulations shall be enforced.] chief executive officer of any town, city or borough shall, in consultation with the zoning commission or combined planning and zoning commission appoint an officer to enforce the zoning regulations. Such person shall be certified as a Connecticut Zoning Enforcement Technician through the Connecticut Association of Zoning Enforcement Officials.

## **17. Amend Section 29-260 regarding the appointment of a building official**

Section 29-260 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*effective on passage*): (a) The chief executive officer of any town, city or borough , ~~unless other means are already provided, shall appoint an officer to administer the code for a term of four years and until his successor qualifies and quadrennially thereafter shall so appoint a successor.~~ Such officer shall be known as the building official. Two or more communities may combine ~~or through a regional council of governments~~ in the appointment of a building official for the purpose of enforcing the provisions of the code in the same manner. ~~The chief executive officer of any town, city or borough, upon the death, disability, dismissal, retirement or revocation of licensure of the building official, may appoint a licensed building official as the acting building official for a single period not to exceed one hundred eighty days.~~

~~(b) Unless otherwise provided by ordinance, charter or special act, a local building official who fails to perform the duties of his office may be dismissed by the local appointing authority and another person shall be appointed in his place, provided, prior to such dismissal, such local building official shall be given an opportunity to be heard in his own defense at a public hearing in accordance with subsection (c) of this section.~~

~~(c) No local building official may be dismissed under subsection (b) of this section unless he has been given notice in writing of the specific grounds for such dismissal and an opportunity to be heard in his own defense, personally or by counsel, at a public hearing before the authority having the power of dismissal. Such public hearing shall be held not less than five or more than ten days after such notice. Any person so dismissed may appeal within thirty days following such dismissal to the superior court for the judicial district in which such town, city or borough is located. Service shall be made as in civil process. The court shall review the record of such hearing and if it appears that testimony is necessary for an equitable disposition of the appeal, it may take evidence or appoint a referee or a committee to take such evidence as the court may direct and report the same to the court with his or its findings of fact, which report shall constitute a part of the proceedings upon which the determination of the court shall be made. The court may affirm the action of such authority or may set the same aside if it finds that such authority acted illegally or abused its discretion.~~

(d) Each municipality shall become a member of the International Code Council and shall pay the membership fee.

**18. Amend Section 29-297 regarding the appointment and/or replacement of a local fire marshal**

Section 29-297 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*effective on passage*): (a) The ~~chief executive officer of any town, city or borough in consultation with the~~ board of fire commissioners or, in the absence of such board, any corresponding authority of each town, city or borough, or, ~~if no such board or corresponding authority exists, the legislative body of each city, the board of selectmen of each town or the warden and burgesses of each borough, or, in the case of~~ an incorporated fire district, the ~~chief executive officer authority of such district~~ shall appoint a local fire marshal and such deputy fire marshals as may be necessary. In making such appointment, preference shall be given to a member of the regular or volunteer fire department of such municipality. Each local fire marshal shall be sworn to the faithful performance of his duties by the clerk of the town, city, borough or fire district and shall continue to serve in that office until removed for cause. Such clerk shall record his acceptance of the position of local fire marshal and shall report the same in writing to the State Fire Marshal within ten days thereafter, giving the name and address of the local fire marshal and stating the limits of the territory in which the local fire marshal is to serve.

(b) The ~~chief executive officer of any town, city or borough in consultation with the~~ board of fire commissioners or, in the absence of such board, any corresponding authority of each town, city or borough or, ~~if no such board or corresponding authority exists, the legislative body of each city, the board of selectmen of each town or the warden and burgesses of each borough or, in the case of~~ an incorporated fire district, the ~~chief executive officer authority of such district~~ may, upon the death, disability, dismissal, retirement or revocation of certification of the local fire marshal, and in the absence of an existing deputy fire marshal, appoint a certified deputy fire marshal as the acting fire marshal for a period not to exceed one hundred eighty days.