



Legislative Update



THE VOICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

MORE Commission Presents Recommendations for 2010; Public Hearing On Them In Planning and Development March 10

Mandates Relief Also On Agenda

Speaker Donovan's "MORE Commission" released a package of recommendations yesterday for consideration during the 2010 General Assembly session.

A **public hearing** on most of the recommendations will be held on **Wednesday, March 10, at 11:30 a.m., 2B, LOB.**

Please note, however, that IT HAS NOT YET BEEN DETERMINED INTO WHICH BILLS (UP FOR HEARING) THE RECOMMENDATIONS WILL GO. CCM staff recommends testimony on the concepts being discussed, rather than the language in the legislation as presently drafted (because that language will change to incorporate the recommendations).

The recommendations for 2010 include:

- Mandate Relief:**
- Relief from responsibility to collect and store possessions of evicted tenants
 - 3-year delay of in-school suspension mandate
 - Changes in property tax laws concerning telecommunication facilities
 - Allowing residual value for depreciation of personal property
 - Repeal of website-posting requirements
- Revenue Streams:**
- 3% increase in hotel/lodging tax (expected to raise \$15-\$20 million):
 - 1/3 to host town
 - 1/3 to all towns in host region
 - 1/3 for regional initiatives (performance incentive grants)
 - Allow municipalities to charge fees based on the cost of the services
 - Extend the present rates of the municipal real estate conveyance tax
- Regional Efficiencies:**
- Regional contracting for school transportation
 - Federal grants for regional economic development
 - Eliminate statutory barriers to multi-town and boards-of-education cooperation
 - Allow health care and prescription drug pooling by towns and boards
 - Allow RESCs to perform construction management services

- Other changes:
- Create new, lower-cost pension plan under MERF for new hires
 - Single arbiter rather than 3-person panel
 - New disclosure requirements for health care brokers
 - Expand purchasing cooperatives to boards of education

PUBLIC HEARING – Wednesday, March 10, 2010, 11: 30 a.m., Room 2B, LOB

Please submit 40 copies of written testimony to Committee staff two and a half hours prior to the start of the hearing in Room 2100 of the LOB. Sign-up for the hearing will run from 9: 00 A. M. to 10: 00 A. M. in Room 2100 of the LOB. The first hour of the hearing is reserved for State Agencies, Constitutional Officers, Public Officials, Legislators and Municipal Elected Officials. Speakers will be limited to three minutes of testimony.

MORE Proposal: 3% Increase in Hotel Lodging Tax (1/3 to host towns, 1/3 to all towns in host region, & 1/3 dedicated to launching regionalism initiatives)

Related Bills:

SB 144 Would provide that ¼ of 1% of sales tax revenue be shared with regional entities.

SB 159 Would provide that ¼ of 1% of sales tax revenue be shared with regional economic development districts.

SB 303 Would allow municipalities to enact a local hotel tax of up to 4% for the “general fund of the municipality, capital expenditures, or any regular or special purpose as provided in the budget enacted each year by the municipality”.

MORE Proposal: Relief from Responsibility for Evicted Tenant Possessions

Related Bill:

Contained in Governor’s mandates relief proposal, HB 5031 and HB 5255 (see below and next page).

MORE Proposal: 3-year Delay for In-School Suspensions

Related Bill:

Would delay the in-school suspension mandate for 2 years, from 7/10 to 7/12.

MORE Proposal: Promote Regional Economic Development Strategies Through Federal Grants

Related Proposals:

HB 5336 Would allow regional economic development districts to enter into shared services agreements.

HB 5383 Would allow the formation of regional economic development districts by regional and other entities, and establish the authority of such districts. Would allow such districts to be eligible for state grants and bond funds.

MORE Proposals: Allow Prescription Pooling Among BOE’s & Promote Health Care Pooling for Towns and BOE’s

Related Proposal:

HB 5337 Would allow two or more municipalities to pursue joint employee health insurance plans.

Other Bills:

HB 5031 Governor’s mandates reform proposal. Would:

- Enact a statutory prohibition to *prohibit the enactment of “costly” new unfunded or underfunded state mandate without a 2/3 vote of both chambers of the General Assembly;*

- Provide a *2-year postponement of the effective date of the in-school suspension mandate* (from 7/1/10 to 7/1/12);
- Remove the mandate that municipalities *store and collect the possessions of evicted residential tenants*;
- Permit municipalities to *post certain information online, rather than publishing such information in the newspaper*, as long as Freedom of Information (FOIA) requirements are met;
- *Limit record-keeping for certain municipal records to 15 years*;
- End of *treble damages penalty for ZEO enforcement*; and
- Provide for *municipal pension reform through development of an alternative benefits plan*.

SB 198 Would require a 2/3 vote of the General Assembly to enact unfunded state mandates.

HB 5257 Would require automatic three-year expiration dates for new municipal mandates enacted after 1/1/11.

HB 5255 Would, among other things, (a) allow towns to post annual town reports electronically, rather than publishing them, (2) remove municipalities from the requirement to collect and store the possessions of residential evicted tenants, (3) allow towns to post various notices on the web, rather than in newspapers, as long as other notice requirements are met, and (4) require that state agencies “to the extent practicable and within available appropriations” provide a mechanism for towns to submit records electronically.

HB 5331 Would authorize municipalities to join in contracts with state agencies for the purchase of services.

HB 5338 Would grant municipalities a two-year reprieve from the statutory obligation to update local plans of conservation and development.

SB 199 Would make technical corrections regarding state and local plans of conservation and development.

SB 394 Would reconstitute the board of directors of the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority (CRRA).

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