



**Testimony
Betsy Gara
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Connecticut Council of Small Towns
Before the Energy & Public Utilities Committee
February 28, 2020**

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) **opposes SB-177, AN ACT CONCERNING ENERGY CONSUMPTION DATA AND LABELING.**

As drafted, the bill requires certain nonresidential property owners, including municipalities, to report on the previous calendar's energy consumption. Many schools, athletic facilities, and other municipal buildings would be subject to the reporting requirement.

Although well-intentioned, COST opposes SB-177 as an unnecessary unfunded mandate.

Cuts in municipal aid combined little or no growth in grand lists are placing significant pressure on municipalities to reduce costs where possible. Given costs associated with numerous state and federal unfunded mandates, however, this is a difficult challenge. COST therefore opposes new unfunded mandates that impose administrative burdens on municipalities.

Municipalities have embraced efforts to improve energy efficiency and reduce costs in an effort to control property taxes and benefit the environment, including performing energy audits, utilizing virtual net metering, installing solar arrays, and entering into power purchase agreements.

Requiring municipalities to document energy consumption and report to the state is an unnecessary paperwork mandate that will require towns to pull staff from other priority projects.

COST urges lawmakers to exempt municipalities from the scope of this bill.

COST is an advocacy organization committed to giving small towns a strong voice in the legislative process. COST champions the major policy needs and concerns of Connecticut's suburban and rural towns.