

# **CRCOG Weekly Legislative Report**

2018 Legislative Session

March 29, 2018

#### **Weekly Legislative Feature Issues:**

After several weeks of public hearing and committee meetings, all but the Judiciary Committee, Finance, Revenue & Bonding Committee, and Appropriations Committee have concluded their committee work.

The Connecticut General Assembly remains busy but has not yet taken action on substantive bills. Instead choosing to convene sessions to vote on legislative and executive nominations, judges, and for the approval of an agreement between the State of Connecticut and a health workers union. Over the next few weeks, the General Assembly's work will transition over to session in which they will convene to vote on bills that have been favorably reported out of the several committees identified in previous weekly reports. The session work will continue through adjournment sine die on May 9, 2018.

## This past week has revealed new developments of particular interest to you:

#### Fiscal Panel's Formula for Revitalizing CT Provokes Democratic Resistance

This past Friday, Democrats in the Connecticut General Assembly voiced their disagreement with the Commission on Fiscal Stability and Economic Growth's report, which contained recommendations that would reduce support for key priorities, including impoverished municipalities, education, and social services.

While standing for questions during a marathon public hearing in the Hall of the House before members of four legislative committees: Appropriations, Commerce; Finance, Revenue & Bonding, and Planning and Development, the Commission's Co-Chairs, Robert Patricelli and Jim Smith argued that despite severely limited time constraints that impacted, the commissioners reached a consensus agreeing that the best way to invest in all of the Democrats' priorities is to end the cycle of state budget deficits and jump-start a lagging economy.

The commission was trying to win legislative approval for a report that offers a broad array of strategies, including:

- Eliminating \$750 million in tax credits and exemptions, most of which are aimed at consumers.
- Ending collective bargaining for state employee benefits after the current contract expires in 2027.

- Establishing electronic tolling on highways and raising gasoline taxes to fund a major transportation initiative.
- Empowering municipal coalitions to add one-half of 1 percentage point to the sales tax rate to fund regional services and diversify local budgets that rely excessively on property taxes.
- And building a major new college campus focused on science and engineering in a major Connecticut city.

Rep. Robyn Porter stated that she is "only seeing sacrifice from the same people over and over again." She asked "when do we strike a balance?"

The 14-member commission's March 1 report featured a wide array of recommendations centered on a major redistribution of state taxes — primarily reducing income tax rates across the board while boosting the sales and corporation levies.

Rep. James Albis remarked that a 2014 state tax incidence report showing that Connecticut's heavy reliance on property taxes to fund municipal government is "incredibly regressive," and places the burden onto lower-middle and low-income households.

Rep. McGee and Rep. Soto said that the report lacks bold ideas on how to revitalize Connecticut's poor urban centers.

On the other side of the aisle, Senator Suzio, a Republican, questioned whether Connecticut needs to dramatically increase spending on transportation in his criticism of the recommendation to implement tolling. Senator Boucher, another Republican, questioned whether a regional sales tax surcharge would help urban centers or weaken their economies.

CT Mirror: Fiscal Panel's Formula for Revitalizing CT Provokes Democratic Resistance 3-23-2018

## **Insurance Industry Fighting Concrete Surcharge**

Insurance industry has come out in strong opposition to legislation that would establish a surcharge on homeowner's insurance policies arguing that such an action would dramatically raise premiums for consumers throughout the state.

A proposal that is currently before the Connecticut General Assembly would place a \$20 annual surcharge on each policy renewed, amended, or endorsed for a homeowners, renters, condominium, or master policy required by condominium associations entered into after July 2018. The funds raised through this surcharge would be place into a crumbling foundation assistance fund that was established last year to help homeowners impacted by failing foundations. Additionally, the proposal would also establish a "peril of collapse" definition in insurance policies, which would place greater responsibility on insurance companies.

Representatives from the Insurance Association of Connecticut, the industry's chief lobbying organization argue that the proposed legislation would hurt homeowners throughout the state. They assert that it would lead to increased insurance premiums due to the mandatory expansion of coverage in policies, in addition to the annual cost of the surcharge.

"Increasing the cost of insurance for all Connecticut residents is not the right solution, and we urge the legislature to reject this harmful proposal," association President Eric George, President of IAC said.

Insurance lobbyists said the program is still in its infancy, and lawmakers should wait to see how it progresses before determining if more assistance is necessary.

Journal Inquirer: Insurance Industry Fighting Concrete Surcharge 3-24-2018.

# Boost in Federal Transportation Money Unexpected, but Welcomed in CT

Sen. Blumenthal has praised the unexpected \$10 billion increase in transportation spending that was included as part of a federal transportation omnibus bill. The bill increased Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grants from \$1 billion to \$1.5 billion. President Trump signed the omnibus package despite wanting states to pay more out of their transportation funds. Connecticut is hoping to get \$45 million in TIGER funds.

Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT) Commissioner James Redeker and US Sen. Blumenthal appeared with each other at a roundtable in Norwalk. Redeker noted that states would still have to pay at least 20% on transportation projects and would need to find a way to pay for that. "We have never given up a federal dollar," Redeker said. Blumenthal added that "we want that money to be coming to Connecticut."

The plan also includes an additional \$1 billion in airport improvement grants, some of which could help Bradley International Airport. An additional \$500 million and \$250 million in funding for Amtrak and rail revitalization and innovation projects, which could help Connecticut if those improvements are made along the Northeast Corridor and the Hartford to Springfield Line, respectively. The bill also included \$540 million in funding for an underground rail line from New Jersey to Manhattan, which Blumenthal said would alleviate rail travel to and from Connecticut. He added "there has to be a major investment in rail. . . but the omnibus is a step in the right direction."

The CT Mirror: Boost in Federal Transportation Money Unexpected, but Welcomed in CT -3-28-2018.

# Tracked Bills:

BILL STATUS LIST					
Bill Number	Priorit y	BA	Title & Synopsis	Sponsors	Status
HB 5045	3		An Act Establishing Accountability For Fair And Affordable Housing Through Zoning Regulations.  To implement the Governor's budget recommendations.	Rep. Joe Aresimowicz (30); Sen. Bob Duff (S25); Sen. Martin M. Looney (S11); Rep. Matthew Ritter (1)	Committees: PD  Status: Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/26)
HB 5046	3		An Act Concerning The Sustainability Of Transportation Projects.  To implement the Governor's budget recommendations.	Rep. Joe Aresimowicz (30); Sen. Bob Duff (S25); Sen. Martin M. Looney (S11); Rep. Matthew Ritter (1)	Committees: TRA  Status: Favorable Change of Reference, Senate to Committee on Finance, Revenue and Bonding (3/27)
HB 5051	3		An Act Concerning The Deposit Of Motor Vehicle Sales And Use Taxes Into The Special Transportation Fund.  To accelerate the rate of deposit of motor vehicle sales	Rep. Fred Wilms (142)	Committees: FIN  Status: Referred to Joint Committee on Finance, Revenue and Bonding (2/9)

		and use taxes into the Special Transportation Fund and eliminate the phase-in.		
HB 5069	3	An Act Reimbursing Certain Municipalities For The Loss Of Motor Vehicle Tax Revenue.	Rep. Michael D'Agostino (91); Rep. Josh Elliott (88); Rep. Robyn A. Porter (94)	Committees: APP  Status: Referred to Joint Committee on Appropriations (2/14)
		To reimburse three municipalities that conducted revaluations after 2015 for lost motor vehicle tax revenue.		
HB 5072	3	An Act Reimbursing Certain Municipalities For The Loss Of Motor Vehicle Tax Revenue.	Rep. Michelle L. Cook (65)	Committees: APP  Status: Referred to Joint Committee on Appropriations (2/14)
		To reimburse three municipalities that conducted revaluations after 2015 for lost motor vehicle tax revenue.		

<u>HB 5073</u>	3	An Act Restoring Holdbacks To The State Budget.To restore budget holdbacks made by the Governor during the current fiscal year.	Rep. Tim Ackert (8)	Committees: APPStatus:Referre d to Joint Committee on Appropriations (2/14)
HB 5079	3	An Act Reducing The Subsidy For Ct Fastrack.  To reduce the subsidy for CT Fastrack.	Rep. Robin Green (55)	Committees: APP  Status: Referred to Joint Committee on Appropriations (2/14)
HB 5123	3	An Act Restoring Education Cost- sharing Grant Funding To Towns.  To restore education cost- sharing grant funding to those towns whose grants were reduced by the executive branch.	Rep. Andrew M. Fleischmann (18)	Committees: APP  Status: Referred to Joint Committee on Appropriations (2/15)

HB 5143	3	An Act Lowering The Age Of Eligibility For Property Tax Relief For Elderly Persons.  To lower the age an elderly person must be to obtain available property tax relief.	Aging Committee	Status: Favorable Change of Reference, House to Committee on Appropriations (3/28)
HB 5150	5	An Act Concerning The Department Of Public Health's Recommendations Regarding Revisions To The General Statutes Concerning Municipal Health Authorities And District Departments Of Health.To implement the recommendations of the Department of Public Health regarding revisions to the general statutes concerning municipal health authorities and district departments of health.	Public Health Committee	Committees: PHStatus:Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/22)

<u>HB 5167</u>	3	An Act Increasing The Amount A Town May Deposit Into A Nonlapsing Account For Unexpended Education Funds.	Education Committee	Committees: ED  Status: File Number 121 (3/29)
		To increase the amount of unexpended funds that a board of education is allowed to deposit into a nonlapsing account at the end of the fiscal year.		
HB 5171	3	An Act Prohibiting The Executive Branch From Making Rescissions Or Other Reductions To The Education Cost Sharing Grant During The Fiscal Year.	Education Committee	Committees: ED  Status: Referred to Office of Legislative Research and Office of Fiscal Analysis 04/03/18 10:00 AM (3/26)
		To prohibit the Governor from making rescissions to a town's education cost sharing grant during the fiscal year.		

HB 5184	3		An Act Permitting The Amendment Of Municipal Charters For The Purpose Of Modifying Budget Adoption Dates.  To permit the amendment of municipal charters for the purpose of modifying budget adoption dates.	Planning and Development Committee	Committees: PD  Status: Referred to Office of Legislative Research and Office of Fiscal Analysis 04/03/18 5:00 PM (3/28)
HB 5199	3	<u>Lin</u> <u>k</u>	An Act Allowing Certain Municipalities To Create Property Tax Relief Programs For Graduates Of Certain Educational Institutions Located In Connecticut.To allow the eight municipalities with largest populations in this state to create a program providing property tax relief as an incentive for certain graduates to buy a first home in such municipalities.	Housing Committee	Committees: HSGStatus:File Number 59 (3/28)

HB 5229	3	An Act Concerning Reimbursement For The Purchase Of Dashboard Cameras With A Remote Recorder And Digital Data Storage Devices Or Services.	Public Safety and Security Committee	Committees: PS  Status: Referred to Office of Legislative Research and Office of Fiscal Analysis 04/03/18 5:00 PM (3/28)
		To expand a grant program that reimburses a municipality for the cost of dashboard cameras purchased during the fiscal years ending June 30, 2017, and June 30, 2018, and digital data storage devices or services purchased during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2018.		
HB 5283		An Act Concerning Neighborhood Revitalization Zones.  To require municipalities to defend and indemnify neighborhood revitalization zone planning committees and their members in certain civil actions.	Planning and Development Committee	Committees: PD  Status: Referred to Office of Legislative Research and Office of Fiscal Analysis 04/03/18 5:00 PM (3/28)

<u>HB 5285</u>		An Act Concerning Authority For Municipalities To Extend Their Budget Adoption Processes.  To authorize municipalities to	Planning and Development Committee	Committees: PD  Status: Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/19)
		extend their budget adoption processes for fiscal year 2018.		
HB 5286		An Act Establishing A Municipal Option To Provide Property Tax Relief To Certain Residents With Homes Damaged By Natural Disasters.To provide a municipal option to allow property tax relief for residents with homes damaged by natural disasters.	Planning and Development Committee	Committees: PDStatus:Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/19)
HB 5317	Lin k	An Act Concerning Municipal Veterans' Representatives. To change	Veterans' Affairs Committee	Committees: VA  Status: File Number 43 (3/26)
		references from "veterans' service contact person" to "municipal veterans' representative" and to permit volunteers to serve		

	as such representatives.		
HB 5324	An Act Concerning Municipal Funding.  To equitably provide state funding to municipalities.	Appropriation s Committee	Committees: APP  Status: APP Public Hearing: Wed 3/28 10:00 AM @ Room 1E (3/19)
HB 5325	An Act Concerning Prekindergarten To Grade Twelve Education Funding.  To provide funding for prekindergarten to grade twelve, inclusive, education by the most cost- efficient, equitable and effective means.	Appropriation s Committee	Committees: APP  Status: APP Public Hearing: Fri 3/9 01:00 PM @ Room 2C (3/2)
HB 5339	An Act Concerning Public Schools.  To require the Department of Education to study	Education Committee	Committees: ED  Status: File Number 128 (3/29)

		issues affecting public schools.		
HB 5355	<u>Lin</u> <u>k</u>	An Act Establishing Standards For The Adequacy Of Dog Shelter During Extreme Weather Conditions.To establish certain requirements for what constitutes adequate shelter for a dog during adverse weather conditions.	Environment Committee	Committees: ENVStatus:File Number 77 (3/28)
HB 5362	<u>Lin</u> <u>k</u>	An Act Concerning The Registration And Inspection Of Municipal Pounds And Shelters.  To require municipal pounds and shelters to register with the Department of Agriculture and follow the same sanitation and animal treatment standards as other registered facilities.	Environment Committee	Committees: ENV  Status: File Number 79 (3/28)

HB 5391	An Act Concerning Transportation Infrastructure.  To require the Commissioner of Transportation to conduct studies and satisfy other requirements pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act for the purposes of developing electronic tolling systems on the highways of this state.	Transportatio n Committee	Status: Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/23)
HB 5436	An Act Concerning Certain Property Tax Agreements Between Municipalities And Prospective Purchasers Of Brownfields And Abandoned Properties And Establishing A Brownfield Remediation Tax Credit.  To authorize municipalities and prospective purchasers of brownfields and abandoned	Commerce	Status: Favorable Change of Reference, Senate to Committee on Finance, Revenue and Bonding (3/27)

	properties to enter into certain agreements concerning property taxes and to establish a tax credit for costs associated with the remediation of a brownfield.		
HB 5456	An Act Concerning Local Representation On The Connecticut Siting Council And The Language Of Property Owner Notices For Certain Facility Applications.To require a municipal representative be appointed for each application before the Connecticut Siting Council concerning an electric distribution company and to require certain Siting Council proceeding notices to abutting propert owners to be written in layman's terms.	l n	Committees: ENVStatus:Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/23)

HB 5483	An Act Authorizing A Study Of The Creation Of A Land Bank Authority.  To require the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management to conduct a study regarding the creation of a land bank authority.	Planning and Development Committee	Committees: PD  Status: Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/26)
HB 5509	An Act Concerning Water Pollution Control Authorities.  To protect consumers from unfair and abusive water pollution control authority proceedings and charges.	Planning and Development Committee	Committees: PD  Status: Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/26)
HB 5510	An Act Concerning The Zoning Of Group Homes.  To limit the ability of municipalities to prohibit group homes that house disabled persons and individuals recovering from substance abuse.	Planning and Development Committee	Committees: PD  Status: Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/26)

HB 5517	An Act Concerning Executive Branch Data Management And Processes.To increase access to data by executive branch agencies by codifying the provisions of Executive Order 39, to create a Connecticut Board of Data Analysis Technology Advisory Board, to require the Office of Policy and Management to establish and oversee a state- wide process improvement initiative, to require towns to transmit certain property assess	Government Administratio n and Elections Committee	Committees: GAEStatus:Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/26)
HB 5561	An Act Improving Code Enforcement Processes.  To permit a municipality to issue on-site citations in order to improve the municipality's code enforcement process and reduce the rate of repeat offenders.	Judiciary Committee	Committees: JUD  Status: JUD Public Hearing: Fri 3/23 10:00 AM @ Room 2C (3/19)

<u>HB 5580</u>	An Act Concerning The Recommendations Of The Commission On Fiscal Stability And Economic Growth.	Appropriation s Committee	Committees: APP  Status: APP Public Hearing: Wed 3/28 10:00 AM @ Room 1E (3/23)
	To require the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management to conduct an analysis of the recommendations made by the Commission on Fiscal Stability and Economic Growth.		
HB 5582	An Act Concerning The Taxation Of Marijuana And Marijuana Products Sold In The State.	Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee	Committees: FIN  Status: FIN Public Hearing: Mon 4/2 10:30 AM @ Room 2E (3/29)
	To provide for the taxation of marijuana and marijuana products on and after the date the retail sale of marijuana or marijuana products is authorized in the state.		

<u>SB 6</u>	3	An Act Implementing The Governor's Budget Recommendations For General Government.To implement the Governor's budget recommendations.	Rep. Joe Aresimowicz (30); Sen. Bob Duff (S25); Sen. Martin M. Looney (S11); Rep. Matthew Ritter (1)	Committees: APPStatus:APP Public Hearing: Wed 3/28 10:00 AM @ Room 1E (3/19)
SB 161	3	An Act Exempting Certain Building Materials From The Sales And Use Taxes.  To exempt from the sales and use taxes building materials that are used in connection with repairs of crumbling foundations of residential buildings.	Sen. Anthony Guglielmo (S35)	Committees: FIN  Status: Referred to Joint Committee on Finance, Revenue and Bonding (2/16)
SB 182	3	An Act Concerning Municipal Tax Appeals And Contingency Agreements.  To require persons representing property owners or lessors in certain appeals concerning real property assessments to be either attorneys or	Planning and Development Committee	Committees: PD  Status: Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/26)

		certified or provisionally licensed real estate appraisers and to prohibit certified or provisionally licensed real estate appraisers from entering into contingency fee agreements in such appeals.		
SB 184	3	An Act Concerning Authorization Of State Grant Commitments For School Building Projects.  To authorize state grant commitments for school building projects.	Education Committee	Committees: ED  Status: Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/26)
SB 263		An Act Eliminating Certain Unclaimed And Seldom Claimed Tax Credits.To eliminate the enterprise zone tax credit for qualifying corporations, the service facility tax credit and the manufacturing facility tax credit for facilities located in an enterprise zone.	Commerce Committee	Committees: CEStatus:Favorabl e Change of Reference, House to Committee on Finance, Revenue and Bonding (3/28)

<u>SB 264</u>	An Act Eliminating The Regional Tourism Districts.  To eliminate tourism districts in an effort to concentrate on state-wide tourism funding.	Commerce Committee	Committees: CE  Status: Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/26)
SB 272	An Act Concerning Municipal Construction Projects.  To require municipalities to hold public hearings on proposed construction projects with a value of more than twenty-five million dollars.	Planning and Development Committee	Committees: PD  Status: Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/19)

<u>SB 274</u>	An Act Concerning The Assessment Of Municipal Taxes On Certain Residential Dwellings.	Planning and Development Committee	Committees: PD  Status: Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/19)
	To require that land on which a one, two, three or four-family residential dwelling is planned for construction, is under construction or has been constructed is assessed exclusive of the value of such dwelling until a certificate of occupancy is issued for such dwelling, the dwelling is used for its intended purpose or title to such dwelling is co		
SB 334	An Act Concerning Municipal And State Competitive Procurement Of Electricity, Natural Gas, Renewable Energy, Telecommunication s Service And Other Energy-related Products By Nonprofit Energy Buying Consortia.To permit certain municipalities, the state, and state entities to purchase electricity, natural	Energy and Technology Committee	Committees: ETStatus:ET Public Hearing: Tue 3/6 01:00 PM @ Room 2E (3/2)

	gas, renewable energy, telecommunications services and other energy-related products using nonprofit energy buying consortia.		
SB 343	An Act Concerning The Effects Of Climate Change On The Safety Plans Of Certain Chemical Facilities In The State And Residents Of Distressed Municipalities.	Environment Committee	Committees: ENV  Status: Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/23)
	To require the updating of safety plans for certain chemical facilities in the state that are at risk of flooding and other severe weather events as reflected in updated sea level rise projections and to establish a Climate Justice Working Group within the Governor's Council on Climate Change.		

<u>SB 349</u>	Lin k	An Act Concerning Regional Animal Shelters.  To provide funding for part of the cost of operating regional animal shelters.	Environment Committee	Committees: ENV Status: File Number 118 (3/28)
SB 356	<u>Lin</u> <u>k</u>	An Act Concerning Licensing And Registration Requirements For Operators Of Certain Short-term Rental Properties.	Housing Committee	Committees: HSG  Status: File Number 119 (3/28)
		To require each municipality to adopt an ordinance or regulation concerning operators of certain short-term rental properties, and to require such operators to obtain a license.		
SB 364		An Act Concerning Special Education Funding.To lower the excess cost threshold from four and one-half times to two times the average per pupil educational costs of a board of education.	Education Committee	Committees: EDStatus:Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/26)

<u>SB 365</u>	An Act Concerning Early Childhood Education Funding.  To provide funding for early childhood education by the most cost-efficient, equitable and effective means.	Appropriation s Committee	Committees: APP  Status: APP Public Hearing: Fri 3/9 01:00 PM @ Room 2C (3/2)
SB 368	An Act Concerning Transportation Funding.  To provide funding for public transportation and transportation projects by the most cost-effective, equitable and efficient means.	Appropriation s Committee	Committees: APP  Status: APP Public Hearing: Wed 3/28 10:00 AM @ Room 1E (3/19)
SB 389	An Act Establishing The Connecticut Transportation Authority.  To establish the Connecticut Transportation Authority to develop and implement electronic tolling systems.	Transportatio n Committee	Committees: TRA  Status: Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/23)

SB 421	An Act Concerning Municipal Budget Reserves For The Biennium Ending June 30, 2019.  To revise municipal budget reserve language that was passed as part of the state budget for the biennium ending June 30, 2019.	Planning and Development Committee	Committees: PD  Status: Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/26)
SB 423	An Act Eliminating The Municipal Spending Cap.  To eliminate the municipal spending cap.	Planning and Development Committee	Committees: PD  Status: Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/26)
SB 445	An Act Concerning An Analysis Of The Recommendations Of The Commission On Fiscal Stability And Economic Growth.  To require the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development to conduct an analysis of the recommendations made by the Commission on	Commerce	Committees: CE  Status: Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/26)

	Fiscal Stability and Economic Growth.		
SB 450	An Act Concerning Municipal Volunteer Services.  To prohibit municipalities from entering into collective bargaining agreements that limit the ability of municipalities to permit volunteer services for the benefit of municipalities.	Planning and Development Committee	Committees: PD  Status: Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/26)

SB 490	An Act Concerning Shared Municipal Services And Local Governments.  To make certain changes to the composition and duties of the Connecticut Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations; specify that the chief executive officer of a municipality shall provide for the manner in which zoning regulations are enforced; specify that a committee established pursuant to a cooperative arrangement agreed to by two or	Planning and Development Committee	Status: Filed with Legislative Commissioners' Office (3/26)
SB 518	An Act Concerning Additional Assistance For Homeowners With Crumbling Concrete Foundations.	Judiciary Committee	Committees: JUD  Status: JUD Public Hearing: Mon 3/26 10:00 AM @ Room 2C (3/22)
	additional assistance to homeowner's with		

		crumbling concrete foundations.		
SB 526		An Act Authorizing Bonds Of The State To Assist In The Implementation Of The Hartford School District Consolidation Plan.	Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee	Committees: FIN  Status: FIN Public Hearing: Mon 4/2 10:30 AM @ Room 2E (3/29)
		To prevent the closure of the L.W. Batchelder Elementary School in the Hartford School District.		