



**Testimony
James Berardino
Connecticut Council of Small Towns
Before the General Law Committee
March 5, 2020**

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) supports efforts to remove barriers that discourage individuals from pursuing certain careers because of difficulties in obtaining occupational licenses.

Many towns are having difficulty filling various positions due to the record number of retirements in municipal government, including engineers, water and wastewater operators, and others positions that require licensure.

Accordingly, COST supports the intent of SB-13 - AN ACT EXPANDING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY IN LICENSED OCCUPATIONS, which is aimed at removing unnecessary roadblocks that may make it difficult for individuals to be eligible to sit for an exam or obtain licensure.

In addition to encouraging students to pursue careers in these important fields, streamlining the process for obtaining licensure will be helpful in attracting individuals into rewarding municipal careers. And, providing applicants with clear guidelines outlining eligibility requirements and whether educational and employment experience may be considered in determining eligibility to sit for the examination is important.

Also, providing opportunities for online training and testing, where appropriate, would be enormously helpful. Many exams are only administered once or twice a year, making it difficult for individuals to travel to locations on certain days to take the exam. In addition, education and training programs may not be offered in all areas of the state, frustrating efforts to attract a wide pool of candidates.

COST is pleased to support SB-13 and looks forward to working with lawmakers to address these issues.

Thank you for providing us with the opportunity to comment in support of this proposal.