



Environment Committee

March 8, 2021

The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members representing 168 towns and cities.

H.B. 6441 “An Act Concerning Climate Change Adaptation.”

CCM supports with revisions H.B 6441.

Current State policies have created a scenario that have limited local governments to dependence on regressive property taxes and increasingly insufficient and unpredictable state aid to fund schools, provide for public safety and maintain critical services and compliance with state and federal environmental goals, such as open space preservation, climate resiliency and adaptation, and stormwater management. CCM supports H.B. 6441 as a good first step to providing municipalities with funding options that will assist them to off set state aid.

STORMWATER AUTHORITIES

Section 1 of H.B. 6441 will allow municipalities to create Stormwater Management Authorities to help offset the significant costs of meeting the requirements of the General Permit for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4). The bill would amend CGS 22a-498 adopted in 2007 that created a Pilot program in which four municipalities were allowed to create such an authority with approval from DEEP. The new language would authorize any municipality to create an authority that could, among other things, levy a fee on real property based upon the amount of impervious surface contained on the property. Any fees collected based on this language would be used by the municipality to offset the cost of stormwater mitigation efforts as outlined within the proposed language.

Any fees established by a local stormwater authority would then be subject to approval by the municipalities local governing body and establishes the process by which the owner of any real property that is assessed a fee based upon their impervious surface may appeal that fee.

For example, a Stormwater Authority created with the passage of this bill could assess a stormwater maintenance fee based on the following principal:

- Rate x Property's Impervious Area = \$ Fee

- The fees and rates for each municipality are set so that there are sufficient funds to properly manage their respective stormwater programs and to meet federal and state regulatory requirements and unfunded mandates.
- The amount this will generate for each municipality will vary by town based on the percentage of impervious surfaces in the municipality as well as the cost of administering the stormwater program.

CCM requests the committee amend HB 6441 to clarify the definition of a municipality and use the language contained in HB 6497 Sec 1 (g) which states:

For purposes of this section and sections 22a-498a and 22a-498b, as amended by this act, "municipality" means any town, city, borough, consolidated town and city or consolidated town or borough. "Municipality" does not include any local school district, regional school district, metropolitan district, district, as defined in section 7-324, or any other municipal corporation or authority authorized to issue bonds, notes or other obligations under the provisions of the general statutes or any special act.

BUYERS CONVEYANCE

CCM supports provisions of this bill that allow municipalities, at local option, to establish a buyer's conveyance fee. Such revenue will provide critical funding for municipal land conservation, stewardship, climate mitigation, resilience and adaptation strategies, and other community environmental projects.

CCM respectfully requests the deletion of language in lines 127 – 134, which seek to restrict the use of such funds in municipalities which are unable to meet the 10% affordable housing threshold.

FLOOD EROSION AND CONTROL BOARDS

CCM supports the provisions of this bill that allow municipalities to add flood prevention and climate resiliency to the purview of municipal flood erosion and control boards.

GREEN BANK

CCM supports sections of the bill which allow the Connecticut Green Bank to make investments in green infrastructure and provide municipalities with needed funding and support for resiliency projects.



If you have any questions, please contact M. Randall Collins Jr., Advocacy Manager of CCM at rcollins@ccm-ct.org or (860) 707-6446 or Donna Hamzy, Advocacy Manager of CCM at dhamzy@ccm-ct.org or (203) 843-0705.