

# Government Administration and Elections Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** SB-1016

**Title:** AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL ETHICS.

**Vote Date:** 3/29/2021

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 3/10/2021

**File No.:**

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### SPONSORS OF BILL:

The Government Administration and Elections Committee

### REASONS FOR BILL:

The goal of this bill is to ensure that every municipality adopts their own code of ethics. In addition, the bill seeks to ensure that the Office of State Ethics develops a model municipal ethics code that municipalities can use as a framework when drafting their own code.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

**Peter Lewandowski, Executive Director, Office of State Ethics:** On behalf of the Office of State Ethics, Mr. Lewandowski submitted testimony in support of the compromise language in this bill, requiring that all municipalities adopt a municipal code of ethics no later than October 1st, 2022. By drafting a model municipal ethics code, Mr. Lewandowski expressed hope that any municipality lacking a code of ethics by January 1st, 2022 would be able to utilize the language in the model code to help draft their own. In addition, Mr. Lewandowski highlighted the provisions in the bill that will require the Office of State Ethics to submit a report on each municipality's compliance by January 1st, 2024. Lastly, Mr. Lewandowski cited the bill's provision that delegates authority to the Office of State Ethics to appropriate available funding to conduct ethics training in municipalities.

### NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

**Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM):** CCM expressed support for SB 1016 and asked the committee to consider adopting the compromise language contained in the bill. CCM emphasized the importance of avoiding a one-size-fits-all code of ethics. In their written testimony, CCM committed themselves to continue working with the Office of State Ethics to

draft a model municipal code of ethics that will help towns adopt their own code of ethics or make revisions to a current code.

**Betsy Gara, Executive Director, Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST):** COST submitted testimony in support of the bill. COST commended the incorporation of a provision in the drafted bill that would not require municipalities that implemented a code of ethics prior to January 1st, 2022 to draft a new one. COST made note of their past opposition towards bills pertaining to municipal ethics codes on the grounds that they were one-size-fits-all in nature. In their testimony, COST highlighted the strength of SB 1016, which allows for towns to adopt their own municipal code that is tailored to the needs of their community. COST committed themselves to work with the Office of State Ethics and the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities to develop a model municipal ethics code and help provide ethics training to municipalities.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

None expressed.

**Reported by: Trevor Hoffman**

**Date: 03/29/2021**