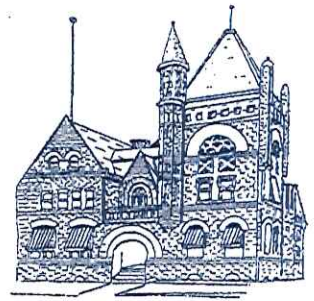




Office of the Mayor

City of West Haven
355 Main Street
West Haven, Connecticut 06516



City Hall
1896-1968

Nancy R. Rossi
Mayor

February 6, 2021

Finance, Revenue and Bonding
Proposed SB Bill 170
An act concerning a three-tiered grants in lieu of taxes program

Nancy R. Rossi
Mayor City of West Haven

Chairman Senator John Fonfara, Representative Sean Scanlon and all the distinguished members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding committee:

My name is Nancy Rossi and I am the Mayor of the City of West Haven and I thank you for the opportunity to present written testimony on enhancing our state's Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) program with a three-tiered grant approach.

The City of West Haven, by state definition, is considered a distressed municipality. When elected in 2017, I was immediately notified that our city would come under the oversight of a newly formed Municipal Accountability Review Board (MARB). This oversight was triggered by budget deficits and the deficit bonding of my predecessor. We are currently in the fourth year of oversight and are making significant progress but continue to rely on state restructuring grants which will phase out next year.

The City of West Haven like many others across the state are struggling with a tax system that unfairly places the largest tax levy on our local property owners. West Haven has large parcels in our city that are tax-exempt. The State does provide PILOT funding but not close to the revenue that would be realized if the property was not exempt and on our tax rolls. Tax exempt property and the reduced amount of state PILOT funding received forces us to shift the burden to our local taxpayers who have already received property tax increases in three consecutive years.

I am in support of this bill and advocate for the increase of PILOT funding to municipalities in general. I fully understand and respect the fiscal and budget challenges the State of Connecticut faces but respectfully request some relief to those that need it most. Proposed Bill 170 is supported by a bipartisan group of municipal leaders and could prevent tax increases as we work to the end a global pandemic and need to help and boost our local economy.

Thank you for allowing me to testify on this important bill and I respectfully ask for your support.

Sincerely,

Nancy R Rossi
Mayor