

Planning and Development Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-5472

Title: AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL FINANCE AND AUDITS.

Vote Date: 3/22/2024

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/13/2024

File No.:

***Disclaimer:** The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

SPONSORS OF BILL:

Planning and Development Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

The bill amends and clarifies certain conditions and procedures within the Municipal Accountability Review Board (MARB) to improve the efficacy of their engagements and to incentivize municipalities to promptly complete their financial reports.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Office of Policy and Management, Executive Financial Offer, Kimberly Kennison](#)

Ms. Kennison testified that the amendments and clarifications in this bill will strengthen and streamline MARB's structure and criteria for municipalities. The penalties imposed by the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) will incentivize municipalities to get financial reports done on time, making OPM's job more efficient.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

None expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

[Eric W. Chester, Lawyer:](#)

Mr. Chester testified in opposition to the bill. He proposed the addition of statutory language to Section 5 of HB 5472. He stated that the bill gives the MARB unlimited time and no deadline to act on a contract, which conflicts with the statute.

[The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities \(CCM\), Associate Director of Policy, Randy Collins](#)

Mr. Collins testified in opposition to Section 6 of HB 5472. Reasoning that payments under CGS 12-81b should not be at the discretion of an executive agency.

[Connecticut Council of Small Towns, Executive Director, Betsy Gara](#)

Ms. Gara testified in opposition to Section 6 and Section 3 of the bill. She states that the provisions of this bill will leave towns vulnerable to their loss of anticipated funding, which towns heavily rely on to plan projects.

[Connecticut AFL-CIO, President, Ed Hawthorne](#)

Mr. Hawthorne submitted written testimony, stating that this bill diminishes collective bargaining rights and keeps public servants in limbo. The MARB should not have the authority to keep the communities they serve waiting for long periods.

[West Haven Federation of Teachers and Schools Nurses, President, Kristen Malloy-Scanlon](#)

Ms. Malloy-Scanlon testified in opposition to the bill. Specifically, Section 5. She states that deadlines are crucial for mediating collective bargaining agreements. Not having them undermines collective bargaining and forgoes accountability from the state or the MARB to act in a timely manner. This would effectively violate collective bargaining rights.

[AFSCME COUNCIL 4, Director for Collective Bargaining, Troy Raccuia](#)

Mr. Raccuia submitted written testimony, stating that this bill eliminates the incentive to bargain. She contests that this bill weakens collective bargaining rights by leaving contracts in the midst of the approval process, uncertain about the State's decision. His suggestion is to remove the language in lines 316-319 to prevent this.

[Connecticut Education Association; Director of Policy, Research, & Government Relations, Ray Rossomando](#)

Mr. Rossomando submitted written testimony, stating that certain provisions unfairly favor management by allowing failure to act on a negotiated contract on the public employer's end. This would harm collaboration efforts between labor and management. Furthermore, they are concerned with provisions that diminish the self-determination of municipalities.

Additional testimony:

Testimony was offered by the following people in opposition to the bill, stating that it takes away town rights and reasons that the majority is not in favor of this bill.

[Gary Corigliano](#)
[Brian Rathbun](#)

Reported by: Sarha Antonio

Date: 4/2/2024