CM’s 2019 State Legislative Program is referenced below and grouped according to the CCM issue-area committee in which they originated.

EDUCATION

1. Provide greater Board of Education oversight and transparency by revising CGS 10-220 to require Boards of Education to report:
   a. Anticipated revenues and expenditures for the preceding month to the Board of Finance or chief elected/appointed municipal official on a monthly basis; and
   b. Budgeted versus actual revenue and expenditures to the Board of Finance or chief elected/appointed municipal on a monthly basis.

2. Provide Needed Minimum Budget Requirement (MBR) Reform:
   a. Allow non-alliance districts, including regional school districts, to eliminate the MBR.
   b. Allow school districts, regional school districts and municipalities to reduce the MBR to reflect the costs associated with special education students when such students leave the district.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT & ENERGY

1. Municipal Solid Waste Management
   a. Prohibit the passage of any new recycling mandates on municipalities until such market is established to manage recyclable materials, as defined in regulations established under CGS 22a-241b in the state.


3. Virtual Net Metering Credit Cap
   a. Eliminate the Virtual Net Metering Credit Cap (CGS 16-244u). Such change should include the requirement that electric distribution companies allow “unassigned” VNM credits to be applied to future bills on a month-to-month basis, known as “banking,” as expressed in CGS 16-244u(c).
   b. In order to maximize underutilized land, CCM suggests that once the cap has been eliminated, provide preferential consideration for projects proposed to be placed on “preferred” sites (i.e., landfills, brownfields, rooftops, etc.).
MUNICIPAL LABOR RELATIONS

1. Oppose any new unfunded mandates on towns and cities. Towns and cities cannot continue to absorb new unfunded or underfunded mandates. The State should not consider new unfunded or underfunded mandates until it provides municipalities with significant and tangible mandate relief.

2. MERS: Provide municipalities enrolled in MERS with the ability to create new tiers similar to the way the State has created new tiers for SERS.

   These new tiers would:
   a. Exclude overtime from retirement benefit calculations;
   b. increase the retirement age to 62;
   c. limit cost-of-living increases to between 0 and 2%; and
   d. increase employee contributions.

LAND USE, HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. Tax Assessment Appeal Proceedings:
   a. Prohibit contingency fee arrangements and/or agreements,
   b. Amend CGS Section 12-117a and Section 12-119 to require persons representing property owners or lessors in certain appeals concerning real property assessments to be either attorneys, certified public accountants, or certified or provisionally licensed real estate appraisers and to prohibit them from entering into contingency fee agreements in such appeals, and
   c. Amend CGS Section 12-117a to require that within ninety days of filing an appeal, the plaintiffs shall file an appraisal of the subject property completed by a person or a firm licensed to perform appraisals in the State of Connecticut. Failure to file such an appraisal within such time period shall be grounds for dismissal of the appeal.

2. Establish the Abandoned and Blighted Property Conservatorship Program in Connecticut. This program would be mirrored after the Pennsylvania program to provide for court-appointed conservators or land banks to bring residential, commercial, and industrial buildings into municipal code compliance when owners fail to comply.
MUNICIPAL LAW, LIABILITY & INSURANCE

1. Reduce municipal liability through:

   a. Limit the scope of the “reckless disregard” exception to municipal immunity statute found in CGS §52-557n(b)(8). Recent Supreme Court decision in Williams v. Housing Auth. of the City of Bridgeport, et al. broadened the scope of reckless disregard. This would be accomplished through either:

      1. Deleting “under all the relevant circumstances” from the end of 52-557n(b)(8), or

      2. Add the following sentence to the end of 52-557n(b): “For purposes of this subsection, a person acts with reckless disregard when he is aware of and consciously disregards a substantial and unjustifiable risk that an act or omission will harm an identifiable person or property.” This would tie the statute into the “identifiable person/imminent harm” exception for negligent acts by a municipal official.

   b. Enact an “assumption of risk” defense to limit liability municipal recreational areas, including, but not limited to, bike, skateboard, dog and water parks. Such “assumption of risk” was created for ski areas and can be modeled for similar municipal provisions.

   c. Grant municipalities that are responsible for inspections as part of the MS4 program specific exceptions from liability under 52-557n.

2. Amend CGS 8-2 to remove the word “advertising” from the type of signs that a municipal zoning commissions may regulate. As a result of a recent State Supreme Court decision in Kuchta v. Arisian, zoning commissions, under that statute, cannot regulate signs that merely express a personal opinion because the statute specifically references advertising signs.
PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

1. Enhance efforts to combat the State’s opioid epidemic by designating a state ombudsman for opioid abuse and control policy tasked with coordinating efforts to enhance and examine sustainable funding streams to support substance abuse prevention, education and recovery efforts.

2. Provide relief to local fire marshals by removing the requirement that they inspect every three-family dwelling or greater each year.

PUBLIC SAFETY, CRIME PREVENTION AND CODE ENFORCEMENT

1. Develop a sustainable funding stream to support the annual operational expenses of Connecticut Regional Fire Schools. In recent years, the funding levels for these schools has been highly unstable. Funding streams could be through imposing either:
   a. An additional fee on each building permit application and/or fire plan review without creating an additional administrative burden on local officials, or
   b. Exploring other cost sharing or service sharing opportunities to reduce training costs.

2. Enhance efforts to make the Resident State Trooper (RST) program more equitable for municipalities:
   a. Oppose any efforts to increase the current municipal contribution rate to be part of the Resident State Trooper program;
   b. Eliminate the requirement that the host municipality pay for the fringe benefit costs directly associated with the RST overtime costs;
   c. Allow the host municipality to be reimbursed when a RST is called away from the town; and
   d. Work with the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) to remove administrative barriers and encourage the sharing of Resident State Troopers.
TAXES AND FINANCE

1. Allow municipalities the option to (a) establish and assess a Community Public Safety and Infrastructure Fee for properties qualifying for a tax exemption under CGS 12-81 and (b) allow any town or city to establish a Stormwater Authority to offset costs of implementing the current MS4 General Permit.

2. Provide needed financial relief related to the costs of Special Education services. Support legislation that promotes equity across all districts in the delivery of special education services, minimizes disruption for families and children, and, removes an unpredictable (sometimes wildly in smaller communities) budget driver from local deliberations by considering options such as (a) having the state assume responsibility for funding special education; or (b) creating a money-follows-the-child program that would allow a town or city to reduce costs incurred when providing special education services if a special education student leaves the district.

3. Provide towns and cities with needed education mandate relief by enacting common sense changes to the Minimum Budget Requirement statutes by removing capital expenditures from the MBR calculation.

4. Allow towns to opt out of the Enterprise Zone tax abatement program if the state does not offset or fully fund the loss in property tax revenue.

TRANSPORTATION

1. Develop a pilot program allow identified municipalities to utilize photographic traffic enforcement technology. To accomplish this, amend state statues to include various traffic infractions to the list of registered owner - presumed operator violations, and provide that revenues collected from such enforcement be allocated directly to municipalities. Current law in Connecticut does not enable law enforcement officials to effectively use such technology to apprehend these specific traffic violators, and ultimately make roadways safer.

2. Maintain current state funding levels for 1) Town Aid Road; 2) Local Capital Improvement Program; and 3) Local Bridge Program, enabling towns and cities to maintain and improve local roads.
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CCM is the state’s largest, nonpartisan organization of municipal leaders, representing towns and cities of all sizes from all corners of the state, with 168 member municipalities.

We come together for one common mission — to improve everyday life for every resident of Connecticut. We share best practices and objective research to help our local leaders govern wisely. We advocate at the state level for issues affecting local taxpayers. And we pool our buying power to negotiate more cost-effective services for our communities.

CCM is governed by a board of directors that is elected by the member municipalities. Our board represents municipalities of all sizes, leaders of different political parties and towns/cities across the state. Our board members also serve on a variety of committees that participate in the development of CCM policy and programs.

Federal representation is provided by CCM in conjunction with the National League of Cities. CCM was founded in 1966

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