



OFFICE OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN

Michael R. Criss
First Selectman, Town of Harwinton

GENERAL LAW COMMITTEE

March 4, 2021

Good afternoon, my name is Michael R. Criss, I am the First Selectman for the Town of Harwinton and I am submitting testimony regarding S.B. 190 "An Act Concerning Municipal Assessment and Finance Personnel".

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Thank you for the opportunity to comment and submit testimony on proposed S.B. 190 "An Act Concerning Municipal Assessment and Finance Personnel". The Town of Harwinton is in support of S.B. 190 which is aimed at ensuring that there are qualified assessors and other key finance personnel available to municipalities.

Some small towns in Litchfield County have had a hard time finding assessors. Although individuals have been interested in working as an assessor, they have had difficulty obtaining the necessary certification since classes are generally held in Storrs, Connecticut in the spring, which is not very convenient for individuals living in Litchfield County.

Assessors are critical to establishing the fair market value of every property in town for the purpose of setting the mill rate.

According to the CT Association of Assessing Officers website, there are currently 30 municipalities looking to hire assessors or assistant assessors.

Online classes offered at different times throughout the year and/or through the community college in our area, would be very helpful in making sure that individuals have access to the required certification courses.

In addition, the committee should determine whether there is any opportunity to streamline the course requirements or create a provisional certificate to ensure that people can serve as assessors.

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Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in support of to S.B. 190 on behalf of the Town of Harwinton. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at any time.

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General Assembly

February Session, 2022

Raised Bill No. 190

LCO No. 1667



Referred to Committee on GENERAL LAW

Introduced by:

(GL)

**AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL ASSESSMENT AND FINANCE
PERSONNEL.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 12-2b of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

3 The Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management shall: (1) In
4 consultation with the Commissioner of Agriculture, develop schedules
5 of unit prices for property classified under sections 12-107a to 12-107e,
6 inclusive, update such schedules by October 1, 1990, and every five
7 years thereafter, and make such data, studies and schedules available to
8 municipalities and the public; (2) develop regulations setting forth
9 standards and tests for: Certifying revaluation companies and their
10 employees, which regulations shall ensure that a revaluation company
11 is competent in appraising and valuing property, certifying revaluation
12 companies and their employees, requiring that a certified employee
13 supervise all valuations performed by a revaluation company for
14 municipalities, maintaining lists of certified revaluation companies and
15 upon request, advising municipalities in drafting contracts with

16 revaluation companies, and conducting investigations and
17 withdrawing the certification of any revaluation company or employee
18 found not to be conforming to such regulations. The regulations shall
19 provide for the imposition of a fee payable to a testing service
20 designated by the secretary to administer certification examinations;
21 and (3) by [himself] the secretary, or by an agent whom [he] the
22 secretary may appoint, inquire if all property taxes which are due and
23 collectible by each town or city not consolidated with a town, are in fact
24 collected and paid to the treasurer thereof in the manner prescribed by
25 law, and if accounts and records of the tax collectors and treasurers of
26 such entities are adequate and properly kept. The secretary may hold
27 meetings, conferences or schools for assessors, tax collectors or
28 municipal finance officers and make recommendations concerning
29 assessor, tax collector or municipal finance officer training, including,
30 but not limited to, online or in-person training programs to be offered
31 by public institutions of higher education for the purpose of supporting
32 a career pathway for assessors, tax collectors and municipal finance
33 officers.

34 Sec. 2. Subsection (a) of section 12-40a of the general statutes is
35 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
36 *passage*):

37 (a) There shall be a committee for the purpose of establishing a
38 program and procedures for the training, examination and certification
39 of assessment personnel, appointed by the Secretary of the Office of
40 Policy and Management and consisting of seven members, six of whom
41 shall serve without pay and shall be appointed initially as follows: Two
42 members for two-year terms; two members for four-year terms; and two
43 members for six-year terms. No less than one member shall be from a
44 municipality with a population over fifty thousand, and no less than one
45 member shall be from a municipality with a population under five
46 thousand. The seventh member shall be an employee of the Office of
47 Policy and Management, who shall have demonstrated competence in
48 Connecticut assessment practices. The Secretary of the Office of Policy
49 and Management shall thereafter appoint two members every two years

50 for six-year terms. Each member of the committee, other than the
 51 representative from the Office of Policy and Management, shall, on and
 52 after July 1, 1984, be a person certified pursuant to subsection (b) of this
 53 section and shall have demonstrated competence in Connecticut
 54 assessment practices. Each member of the committee, other than the
 55 representative from the Office of Policy and Management, appointed on
 56 or after July 1, 1984, shall be employed by a municipality in the state in
 57 a position relating to the assessment of property for the purposes of the
 58 property tax. Any member of the committee who ceases to be an
 59 employee of the Office of Policy and Management, or to be certified
 60 pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, as the case may be, shall cease
 61 to be a member of the committee and the secretary shall appoint a
 62 replacement to fill the remainder of the term. Said committee shall (1)
 63 elect its own chairman, [and] (2) adopt regulations, in accordance with
 64 the provisions of chapter 54, for the training, fees and examination of
 65 assessment personnel, including, but not limited to, standards for the
 66 certification and recertification of assessors, and (3) on or after the
 67 effective date of this section, amend such regulations to ensure that such
 68 training and examination is readily available online or at various
 69 locations throughout this state. Such regulations may include
 70 requirements for any type of training or experience, or combination
 71 thereof, the committee deems appropriate.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
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Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	12-2b
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	12-40a(a)

Statement of Purpose:

To: (1) Authorize the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management to make certain recommendations concerning assessor, tax collector and municipal finance officer training; and (2) require the committee for training, examination and certification of assessment personnel to adopt regulations to ensure that assessment personnel examination and training is readily available online or at various locations throughout this state.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]