



## OFFICE OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN

**Michael R. Criss**  
**First Selectman, Town of Harwinton**

### ***PUBLIC SAFETY & SECURITY COMMITTEE***

February 11, 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 H.B. 5585 "An Act Concerning Agricultural Fairs and Police Officers."

#### **H.B. 5585 "An Act Concerning Agricultural Fairs and Police Officers"**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and submit testimony on proposed H.B. 5585 "An Agricultural Fairs and Police Officers." On behalf of the Town of Harwinton we support H.B. 5585. This bill would limit the reimbursement rate for Resident State Troopers that provide onsite security traffic control related to Agricultural Fairs to match the municipalities rate of 85% of the officer's total compensation.

The Resident State Trooper program is a prime example of how state and municipalities can work together to share costs and protect our residents. Although Harwinton was very disappointed to see the state's efforts over the years to get out of this partnership, we are happy to still have this program in place. Without municipalities participating in this program, the full cost of State Police services would fall on the shoulders of the state requiring municipalities to start their own police forces. Although much work and collaboration should be done to reestablish a more equitable Resident State Trooper program between the state and the municipalities, at least H.B. 5585 provides relief to our already struggling Agricultural Fairs.

Agricultural Fairs are important events that help to promote community service, fun-filled family activities along with supporting Agricultural efforts. These events act as key educational entertainment for residents who want to learn more about Connecticut or municipal history. As a result of the large crowds that attend these fairs, public safety is needed to ensure the safety of the attendees and the volunteers. Several, if not most, events utilize volunteer fire, fire police, cadets and ambulance services.

## **TOWN OF HARWINTON**

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However, over the years, some of these events require law enforcement for security and traffic enforcement. H.B 5585 would ensure these fairs would pay the normal municipal contribution for the Resident State Trooper.

In addition, there is much room in this bill that should be considered to be included and/or proposed in forthcoming bills such as; requiring the state to reimburse municipalities or provide credits for Resident State Troopers to spend outside their community. Also, allowing municipalities to assign their own Resident State Troopers to town activities rather than the state blocking municipalities from doing this. By assigning the appointed Resident State Troopers to their home municipality, only strengthens community ties and outreach for years to come.

I look forward to working with the committee and collaborating on any solutions moving forward. I strongly encourage the committee in taking this first step by supporting H.B 5585

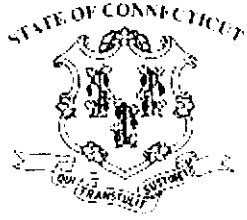
Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony on behalf of the Town of Harwinton. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at any time.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "M. Criss", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

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General Assembly

January Session, 2021

**Proposed Bill No. 5585**

LCO No. 1111



Referred to Committee on PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY

Introduced by:

REP. CANDELORA, 86th Dist.

SEN. CICARELLA, 34th Dist.

SEN. COHEN, 12th Dist.

REP. PARKER, 101st Dist.

**AN ACT CONCERNING AGRICULTURAL FAIRS AND STATE POLICE OFFICERS.**

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

- 1 That section 29-5 of the general statutes be amended to limit the
- 2 reimbursement rate that a town or an organization that sponsors an
- 3 agricultural fair in a town with resident state troopers pays state police
- 4 officers who provide on-site security for the fair and traffic control on
- 5 public roads during such fair to eighty-five per cent of the cost of
- 6 compensation, maintenance and other expenses of such officers.

**Statement of Purpose:**

To limit the reimbursement rate for state police officers providing on-site security and traffic control related to agricultural fairs in towns with resident state troopers.