



# Connecticut

## *Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association*

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### **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

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#### **RAISED BILL 1083 AN ACT REORGANIZING LOCAL LAND USE COMMISSIONS, BOARDS, AND AGENCIES**

**SUMMARY:** The raised bill proposes a comprehensive reorganization of the way municipalities organize and manage land use planning and regulation.

**ANALYSIS:** The proposal would require the adoption of ordinances, regulations, and procedures; recruitment of volunteers; and reorganization of staffing. This would constitute a significant, and expensive, effort by municipalities of all sizes. Specific concerns with the proposal include:

- An unrealistic expectation that a sufficient pool of volunteers with knowledge and interest in wetlands, zoning, and subdivision issues would be willing to serve;
- An unmanageable work load for the proposed Development Review Agency;
- The implication that a Land Use Appeals Board would vary wetlands and subdivision standards.
- The logistic requirements to adopt and adapt to the new organization and the uncertainty it would create for property owners.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** The fiscal impacts of these revisions on municipalities would be significant.

**CCAPA POSITION:** Connecticut's municipalities have developed and refined their land use regulatory procedures over several decades, evolving to address local concerns and interests. **CCAPA** believes that the existing system works well and remains flexible enough to allow continued adjustments to meet changing goals and visions for the community, as guided by Plans of Conservation and Development. Connecticut Statutes currently do not preclude the consolidation of land use regulatory agencies, and some towns have done so.

**CCAPA** does not believe that such a radical reorganization of the local land use process, such as proposed by the subject bill, is necessary to improve the land use decision process. We continue to believe that the most important step toward such improvement is the provision of adequate planning resources and capacity at all levels of government. This includes our support for creation of a State Office of Planning as we have testified with respect to other bills.

The Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association does not support this bill as currently proposed. However, we will be pleased to work with the Committee and other interests to identify what, if any, organizational improvements or consolidation of procedures may be appropriate to promote a more efficient and effective planning and land use approval process.