



Testimony on House Bill 7405

Submitted by Isabel Blank, External Affairs Manager

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Good afternoon distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Isabel Blank. I am Manager, External Affairs at the Yankee Institute for Public Policy, and I am writing to testify on **House Bill 7405: An Act Concerning State Mandates**. For questions or follow up, please contact me at isabel@yankeeinstitute.org.

This bill would require the Office of Policy and Management to conduct a review of state mandates. We support this type of audit and recommend that these reviews focus on providing recommendations for how to minimize the extent and cost of state mandates.

It is our local governments that we look to for many of the basic functions of government - including education, public safety, and public health. But in Connecticut, the cost of municipal government is driven up by state mandates, inflating our property tax bills and making it harder for people to live here. As the legislature and Governor continue to look for solutions to out of control property taxes, this bill could provide answers.

If implemented, reviews of state mandates will certainly find that state government can offer municipalities some flexibility and relief through reforms to prevailing wage, binding arbitration, and minimum budget requirements for education. These state mandates limit local governments' ability to balance their budgets, adjust to changing financial situations, save money, and decrease tax pressure on their residents.

For these reasons, we support this bill.