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Kevin Maloney  
(203) 710-3486

## Connecticut's Local Leaders Call for More Inclusion and Transparency in the Budgeting Process

NEW HAVEN, June 12, 2015 – Today the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) said its membership — representing 158 cities and towns of all sizes across every region of the state — is as concerned about *how* the budget was developed as *what* it delivered.

“While we are certainly supportive of the efforts to ease the burden on property tax payers, we think it’s critical that state lawmakers work more collaboratively with municipal leaders to develop legislation,” said Joe DeLong, CCM’s recently named Executive Director. “To create better policies, we definitely need a better process.”

DeLong believes that CCM offers a unique perspective — and a unifying voice — to strengthen that process.

“We don’t look at the budget in terms of winners or losers. For us, it’s not about Democrats vs. Republicans. Or businesses vs. social services. We can’t pick sides. Or champion one issue. We need it all to work together in the best possible interest of everyone in our communities,” said **Matt** Galligan, CCM President and South Windsor Town Manager.

What the group is calling for is two-fold: 1) to have CCM, as the state’s only non-partisan group of cities and towns, be more included in the development and implementation of legislation and 2) to ensure that process is more transparent as well as more inclusive.

“Property taxes aren’t the only things that matter to municipal leaders,” said Deberey Hinchey, Mayor of Norwich. “The vibrancy of our communities depends on the attractiveness of our business environment, the health of our schools, the support for our social and safety services, the upgrade of our transportation network. These aren’t just state issues. They’re extremely local issues. We can’t be shut out from these discussions.”

DeLong says CCM looks forward to working with legislators to improve the process, ease the contentiousness, and enhance the outcomes of the State’s budgeting sessions.

The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities plans to unveil its new vision and updated structure at next week’s Annual Meeting on Thursday, June 18 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Cromwell, CT. The session is open to the public beginning at 10:30 AM.