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Contact:

Mayor Bill Finch of Bridgeport

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Bruce Wollschlager appointed Interim CCM CEO; Ron Thomas to lead CCM advocacy at State Capitol

The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) Board of Directors announced today, Wednesday, January 15, that the Board ***has appointed Bruce Wollschlager to serve as CCM's Interim CEO; and that long-time senior CCM lobbyist Ron Thomas, Director of Public Policy and Advocacy, will lead CCM's advocacy efforts at the State Capitol and in Washington, D.C.*** These actions follow the retirement of former CCM Executive Director and CEO, Jim Finley, who retired from his post at CCM after serving as the chief executive for nearly seven years and advocating for Connecticut towns and cities for thirty-four years.



Wollschlager is President and CEO of the Connecticut Interlocal Risk Management Agency (CIRMA), the insurance services arm of CCM and the market leader in providing municipal insurance and risk management in Connecticut. Wollschlager said: “I have worked with Jim for the past 12 years and wish him all the best in his future endeavors. And, I look forward to working with Ron Thomas and all the dedicated professionals at CCM to ensure a smooth transition period and continue our strong legacy of meeting the needs of Connecticut’s municipalities.”

“We are confident that CCM will continue to perform at a high level,” said Mayor Finch. “CCM’s experienced and dedicated staff, led by Bruce, will continue to meet the advocacy and service needs that Connecticut town and city leaders have relied on from CCM.”



Ron Thomas – who has been successfully serving CCM at the State Capitol for 25 years – will now have overall responsibility for policy development, advocacy and messaging. Among his areas of expertise include appropriations; land use; housing and community development; labor relations; elections; judiciary; and children and families issues. Ron has also served on a wide range of state and local boards and commissions.

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Wollschlager has over 32 years of experience as an attorney and insurance professional. Bruce began his career as an insurance defense litigator in the CT and Massachusetts venues, and has held various positions including General Counsel and Sr. Executive with Blue Ridge Insurance, Middlesex Mutual Assurance, Shelby Insurance Company and Sentry Insurance Company.

Bruce is a graduate of Fairfield University with a B.A. in Politics, and received his Juris Doctor from Western New England College School of Law. He has sat on the Board of Directors of the CT Fair Plan, the CT Insurance Guarantee Association, and the Insurance Association of CT. Bruce currently sits on the Board of Directors for NLC Mutual Insurance Company.

Thomas holds Bachelor of Arts from Virginia State University and a Master's in Public Administration from Bernard M. Baruch College (City University) in New York City. Prior to his 25 year career at CCM, his experience includes serving as a National Urban Fellow and Special Assistant to the Mayor of Hartford.

“On behalf of my colleagues and those who served before us, I express my sincere thanks for Jim Finley’s leadership and unstinting dedication to the interests of local government in Connecticut and nationally,” said Bill Finch, Mayor of Bridgeport and CCM President. “Jim played a major role in critical major public policy issues that have impacted towns and cities.”

Moving forward for the 2014 General Assembly session, CCM’s state legislative priorities, which were developed, vetted, and approved by member town and city leaders this fall, are focused around the notion that healthy towns, cities and regions are key to Connecticut’s recovery, and that can be best accomplished by supporting state aid to hometowns; assisting struggling core communities; fostering regional collaboration; reforming state mandates; and enhancing safety within communities.