

S.273
January 31, 2018

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee this afternoon. Below are some initial thoughts regarding the planning provisions of S.273. These are my personal opinions based on conversations with some of my peers. They have not been voted on by the CCRPC Board.

Sec. 18. Public Safety Planning Grants

To encourage municipalities to explore and implement any form of regionalization of public safety services, it would be very beneficial if there was a source of State funding available. We support the idea of municipalities being able to band together and request funds through their RPC or RPCs.

We would encourage grant amounts of \$50,000 annually. In Chittenden County, our municipalities have contributed \$40,000 and \$50,000 the last two years to pay for consultants and attorneys. This cash has been supplemented by significant CCRPC and Colchester staff time (>\$80,000) with other participating municipalities also contributing additional staff time over the last 18 months.

\$50,000 grants should be made available each year. It will take 2-3 years to work through all of the issues involving governance, labor, facilities and equipment, and operating procedures. Grants could be administered through ACCD or through the Vermont Department of Emergency Management (VEM). Each RPC already has a performance grant with VEM under Emergency Management Performance Grant program.

Sec. 10. Municipal Plans

We are concerned about adding another required element to municipal plans. Before adding any new requirements, we would ask that the regional and municipal planning section of statute be reviewed to determine which parts should really be required and which could be optional.

In the interim, if this issue needs to be addressed, perhaps it could be added to the utility and facility element as follows:

(4) A utility and facility plan, consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective community facilities and public utilities showing existing and proposed educational, recreational and other public sites, buildings and facilities, including hospitals, libraries, power generating plants and transmission lines, water supply, sewage disposal, refuse disposal, storm drainage, public safety, and other similar facilities and activities, and recommendations to meet future needs for community facilities and services, with indications of priority of need, costs and method of financing.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. I'd be happy to answer any questions.

Charlie Baker
Executive Director