



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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**COST Announces Town Crier Award Honorees**

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST), which represents 115 smaller communities throughout Connecticut, presented four lawmakers with Town Crier Awards at its annual meeting on January 28 at the Aqua Turf in Plantsville, Connecticut.

COST's Town Crier Award was established to recognize and honor state lawmakers and public officials who have distinguished themselves as outstanding advocates on issues affecting Connecticut's small towns.

This year's recipients are:

- **State Senator Rick Lopes** (*D – Berlin, Farmington, and New Britain*)
- **State Senator Jeff Gordon** (*R - Ashford, Chaplin, Coventry, Eastford, Ellington, Hampton, Stafford, Thompson, Tolland, Union, Vernon, Willington, and Woodstock*)
- **State Representative Jaime Foster** (*D – East Windsor, Ellington, and Vernon*)
- **State Representative Tony Scott** (*R - Easton, Monroe, and Trumbull*)

**Sen. Rick Lopes:** "As Senate Chair of the legislature's Environment Committee, Sen. Lopes has been instrumental in supporting the creation of new product stewardship programs to help towns address solid waste management challenges," said Betsy Gara, COST Executive Director in announcing the award. "He has also been a strong supporter of efforts to protect farmland, forestland, wetlands, and open space which helps preserve the state's natural resources and scenic beauty," Gara added.

"In addition, Sen. Lopes has been a leader in passing legislation to provide municipalities with tools to address increased flooding and more extreme storm events, including authorizing the creation of climate resiliency improvement districts, and improving the coordination of state, local, and regional planning efforts."

"His commonsense approach to addressing environmental issues is greatly appreciated. COST is honored to present a Town Crier Award to Sen. Lopes for his work on behalf of the state's local governments."



**Sen. Jeff Gordon:** “Sen. Gordon has proven to be very responsive to the concerns facing Connecticut’s small towns, tackling a wide range of issues in a thoughtful manner,” said Betsy Gara, COST Executive Director, in presenting the award.

“Sen. Gordon’s expertise on zoning and land use issues has been instrumental in voicing concerns with top-down, one-size-fits-all approaches to housing development,” Gara said. “In addition, Sen. Gordon has played a leadership role in addressing issues related to the resident trooper program, which small towns rely on to protect public safety. He has also supported efforts to increase the state Medicaid reimbursement rate for ambulance services to ensure that residents have prompt access to emergency medical care,” Gara added.

“COST is honored to present Sen. Gordon with our Town Crier Award for his staunch advocacy on behalf of the state’s small towns.

**Rep. Jaime Foster:** “We are honored to present Rep. Jaime Foster with COST’s Town Crier Award,” said Betsy Gara, COST Executive Director.

“Rep. Foster was selected to receive COST’s Town Crier Award in recognition of her leadership role in addressing concerns facing small towns, including issues relating to the siting and taxation of large solar arrays, and the protection of open space, forest land, and farmland,” Gara said. “She is also working on legislation to assist municipalities in connecting to the statewide public safety radio system to enhance public safety in our small towns.”

“Rep. Foster collaborates with lawmakers across party lines to develop thoughtful legislation to address concerns facing the state’s rural towns and other smaller communities,” Gara added.

**Rep. Tony Scott:** “Rep. Scott worked tirelessly to raise concerns regarding a sweeping housing bill and the cost and compliance burdens the bill would impose on the state’s smaller communities. His strong opposition helped set the stage for revising the bill in special session to help mitigate some major concerns. His balanced approach to addressing housing issues is greatly appreciated,” said Betsy Gara, COST Executive Director.

“Rep. Scott also supports efforts to fund programs to preserve farmland. In addition to helping farmers, preserving farmland helps maintain the scenic beauty and rural character of many of our small towns,” Gara added.



“COST is honored to present our Town Crier Award to Rep. Scott for his effective advocacy on behalf of the state’s small towns.”

*Founded in 1975, The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) is an advocacy organization committed to giving small towns a strong voice in the legislative process. Its members are Connecticut towns with populations of less than 35,000.*