to Your Freedom ...

themselves' "a safe zone for civil liberties." Cornwall First Selectman Gordon Ridgway said, "...We had to be careful about interjecting national issues into a town meeting. Generally, even though we all talk about national issues, the local government is supposed to deal with local issues."

But states and communities can pass resolutions against the Patriot Act. Connecticut is working on one of 28 statewide measures to condemn the act, and 48 states are working on local resolutions in multiple towns. In Connecticut alone, nine town resolutions have been passed, and 11 more are in the works.

Nearly 400 communities have already passed such policies. And though the House did not allow a vote on the adding of a civilian board to the Patriot Act provisions, 171 representatives voted against the reauthorization, an increase of 150 percent of those voting against the act when it first passed in 2002. Clearly, even members of the House are concerned with the Patriot Act's effect on both civil liberties and community governance.

Representative John Larson, who voted against the Act, and Representative Nancy Johnson, who voted for it, can be reached at the addresses below.

Senators Chris Dodd and Joe Lieberman will also have an opportunity to voice the opinions of their constituents as the House and Senate agree on a version of the act and its sunsets to authorize together. If we do not make our position clear, the result will most likely leave a bad taste in the mouth of Connecticut. After all, we are the Constitution State.

Representative John Larson, 221 Main Street, 2nd Floor, Hartford, CT 06106 Phone: 860-278-8888.

Representative Nancy Johnson, 1 Grove Street New Britain, CT 06053 860-223-8412.

Or e-mail either representative at: http://www.house.gov/writerep/.

Senator Christopher Dodd, Putnam Park 100 Great Meadow Road, Wethersfield, CT 06109. Phone: 800- 334-5341.

E-mail Senator Dodd at: http://dodd.senate.gov/webmail/form-opinion.html.

Senator Joseph Lieberman One Constitution Plaza, 7th Floor, Hartford, CT 06103. Phone: 800-225-5605.

E-mail Senator Lieberman at: http://lieberman.senate.gov/contact/index.cfm?regarding=issue.

Charlene LaVoie is the community lawyer in Winsted and Rachel Lewis is an intern at the Office of the Community Lawyer and a senior at UMASS-Amherst.