



**STATEMENT SUPPORTING  
HOUSE BILL 5266: AN ACT AUTHORIZING BONDS OF THE STATE FOR  
NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION IN HARTFORD**

**COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE  
FEBRUARY 5, 2009**

The MetroHartford Alliance is Hartford's Chamber of Commerce and the region's economic development leader. The membership of the MetroHartford Alliance is representative of businesses of all sizes, health care providers, and institutions of higher education, as well as 34 municipalities. The Alliance's mission is to ensure that the Hartford Region competes aggressively and successfully for jobs, talent and capital so that it thrives as one of the country's premier places for all people to live, work, play, and raise a family.

Hartford is a city of only 18 square miles but 17 distinct and vibrant neighborhoods. It is these neighborhoods that make the city a rich, diverse cultural crossroads and strengthen Connecticut's urban small business backbone. Our businesses of all sizes are dependent on the patronage of both Hartford residents and those who work here or visit the city for arts, entertainment or educational purposes.

The neighborhood surrounding Blue Hills Avenue, including its unique retail merchant corridor, serves as a major economic driver for North Hartford and the City as a whole. The strength of the neighborhood is in its merchants and residents, who have organized to continue the revitalization of the corridor. This legislation is a key component in spurring economic development in our capitol city and the region. This includes the establishment of a program focused on mentoring opportunities for our youth, who are the key to workforce development in the future.

House Bill 5266 authorizes the issuance of bonds to fund a grant to the City to place the power lines along Blue Hills Avenue underground. This is one major component of a comprehensive plan of renewal for this merchant corridor. Linked with façade improvements, streetscape beautification and the Hartford 2010 plan, the underground power lines would serve as another piece in enhancing the northern gateway to the Capitol City.

The future success of Hartford's neighborhoods is essential to the success of the city overall. Therefore, we respectfully ask for your consideration and support of House Bill 5266, *An Act Authorizing Bonds of the State for Neighborhood Beautification in Hartford*.