



# State of Connecticut

## SENATE

STATE CAPITOL  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

**SENATOR KEVIN D. WITKOS**  
EIGHTH DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING  
SUITE 3400  
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591  
CAPITOL: (860) 240-8800  
TOLL FREE: (800) 842-1421  
FAX: (860) 240-8306  
E-mail: Kevin.Witkos@cga.ct.gov

**RANKING MEMBER**  
ENERGY AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE  
GENERAL LAW COMMITTEE

**MEMBER**  
LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

Public Hearing Testimony  
February 10, 2009  
Commerce Committee  
Kevin Witkos, State Senator, 8<sup>th</sup> District

### **Re: Senate Bill 495 – An Act Concerning an Affordable Business Climate**

Good morning Senator Lebeau, Representative Berger, Ranking Members Frantz and Alberts and members of the Commerce Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of proposed *Senate Bill 495 – An Act Concerning an Affordable Business Climate*.

Connecticut and the nation are both collectively facing a pivotal point in our shared histories. Across the nation, record numbers of homes are being foreclosed upon, banks are continuing to fail and consumer confidence is at an all time low. Here in Connecticut our unemployment is at the highest rate in over 16 years. While we struggle to create new businesses, the ones still left continue to leave the state in record numbers and our state faces an \$8 billion dollar plus deficit in the next two years that grows by the minute.

While this crisis rages both across our state and our nation, there are some who argue that the state holds little blame for our current economic climate – that the problems of our current economic crisis were not created or even exacerbated by our state. However, if we as Legislators take this opportunity to simply blame others, while neglecting to look inward as a state, we do a grave disservice to the people of the state of Connecticut.

This is why I am introducing of *SB 495 - An Act Concerning an Affordable Business Climate*. For far too long, Connecticut has languished at the bottom of the list in regards to job creation and business growth. SB 495 seeks to address one of the primary causes of our stagnancy – burdensome and redundant business regulations.

At the federal level, the Small Businesses Administration does a yearly survey in which they ask businesses which regulations and laws are the most burdensome for them. The SBA recognizes that while regulations affect businesses big and small, small businesses disproportionately bear the burden. What is remarkable about this yearly survey is the fact that the SBA actively solicits input from businesses, rather than simply assuming they know the answer.

In the spirit of the SBA, I too have reached out to various businesses and organizations to garner their input and while I am presently waiting to hear back on their input, I can assure the committee that the wait will be worth it. This is one of the few bills that I believe we can proudly call "a work in progress." In fact, we should want it to be a work in progress. We should want legislators to actively be involved. We should want businesses to be involved. We can only hope that at this public hearing today a business will come forward with a suggestion to help make Connecticut more business friendly.

In closing, I would like to thank committee for raising the bill and for making Connecticut a destination state for business and I sincerely hope that the committee strongly considers drafting the bill so that it can make its way through the legislative process.