

# **THE ASSOCIATED GENERAL CONTRACTORS OF CONNECTICUT, INC.**



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**House Bill 6655, An Act Concerning Authorization of State Grant Commitments for School Building Projects and Concerning Changes to the Statutes Concerning School Building Projects**  
**Education Committee**  
**March 16, 2009**

## **AGC/CT Position: Support**

Connecticut Construction Industries Association, Inc. (CCIA) represents the commercial construction industry in Connecticut and is committed to working together to advance and promote a better quality of life for all citizens in the state. CCIA is comprised of more than 350 members, including contractors, subcontractors, suppliers and affiliated organizations representing all sectors of the construction industry. Associated General Contractors of Connecticut (AGC/CT), a division of CCIA, represents commercial, industrial, and institutional construction contractors, subcontractors, material suppliers and professionals serving the construction industry. AGC/CT is the Connecticut chapter of the Associated General Contractors of America, a national contractors trade association.

House Bill 6655, An Act Concerning Authorization of State Grant Commitments for School Building Projects and Concerning Changes to the Statutes Concerning School Building Projects, authorizes state grants for public school building projects in cities and towns across the state. AGC/CT supports House Bill 6655 and we respectfully request that the Education Committee favorably approve the bill.

House Bill 6655 arose out of the school construction project priority listing prepared by the Commissioner of Education after reviewing applications for state grants for public school building projects and previously authorized projects which have changed substantially in scope or cost. The list was submitted to the committee in December. If the bill is approved, the Commissioner would be authorized to fund the projects.

Local school construction projects are very important to municipalities. They are often the culmination of many years of study and analysis of community needs. Many school systems are just beginning to bring their schools into the 21<sup>st</sup> century – to modernize them and equip them to meet the needs of students so that they can receive a quality education and become competitive in the new economy.

In the current recession, maintaining state grant commitments for local building construction projects is even more important. Cities and towns depend on the state's assistance in their efforts to meet the educational needs of their students. Many of these projects become the pride of local residents. The projects create jobs and boost local economies. They help maintain and increase property values, helping improve the quality

of life for residents and a primary reason why people move to a town or remain in town. Connecticut has some of the best schools in the nation in part because of the quality of construction of its local schools.

The state's continuing commitment to local building projects is even more important in light of the federal economic stimulus package. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 provides \$8.8 billion overall for education funding (\$546 million for Connecticut), making the funds available to Governors on a discretionary basis for public safety, public schools and higher education facility school modernization, renovation and repair. School construction as a separate spending item, however, was not in the final economic stimulus bill.

Please contact John Butts of AGC/CT or Matthew Hallisey of CCIA at (860) 529-6855 if you have any questions or if you need additional information.