



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Testimony Regarding, proposed House Bill No. 5495, *An Act Concerning Fair Advertising for Connecticut Vineyards*, Before the Environment Committee, February 18th, 2009.

Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, members of the Environment Committee, my name is F. Philip Prelli, Commissioner of Agriculture. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on the above referenced bill.

The purpose is to explain how the "CT Wine Trail" signage program works. The Department is not taking a position on this bill.

At this time, the CT Department of Transportation (DOT) offers to install "CT Wine Trail" signs for vineyards/wineries that are members of the CT Vineyard and Winery Association and appear in the Association's "CT Wine Trail" brochure. Vineyards/wineries are also required to be open to the public with regular and reasonable hours which offer tours on a regularly scheduled basis. The signs will display the CT Grown logo and appropriate directional arrow along with the words *Connecticut Wine Trail*.

These "CT Wine Trail" signs are placed along the best route from the state highway as determined by DOT. If additional signage is needed on city or state roads, the applicant must obtain permission from local authorities to place "trail-blazing" signs along the route. The "trail-blazing" signs are the responsibility of the vineyard/winery, while the "CT Wine Trail" signs are fabricated and installed by DOT. For vineyards/wineries located on state highways, the "CT Wine Trail" signs will be installed by DOT in both directions of travel. No signage is permitted on expressways.

For vineyards/wineries not on the CT Wine Trail, DOT offers a second signage program. This signage reads "Tour Vineyard & Winery" with the CT Grown logo and an arrow pointing in the appropriate direction. The dimensions, fabrication, and sign placement for this additional signage program are the same as the "CT Wine Trail" signage program.

Thank you for considering my testimony today. Please understand that this is a Department of Transportation program that many of our vineyards/wineries take advantage of and any additional questions regarding the history of the program and specific program guidelines should be directed to them.