

## **HB 5895 – Notes and Facts – Transcript of Written Testimony from Anton Rick-Ossen**

- Hartford suffers from high unemployment and low rates of car ownership. These facts are not unrelated. For a person to become employed, a job must exist, they must be trained for it and they must be able to reach it. With this in mind, a group out of the West End Community Center began a petitioning drive to start crosstown bus service. Various community organizations throughout Hartford signed letters of support on behalf of the crosstown bus. More than 500 petitions were signed.
- Currently all but two bus routes travel into and out of downtown. The trip takes 25 minutes in and 25 minutes out. To go two neighborhoods over by bus in Hartford requires a discouraging amount of time. Over a year, this missed time adds up to almost \$3,000 in lost wages and significantly limits job opportunities for Hartford residents.
- As a result of the community support for crosstown service, CTTRANSIT agreed to meet and a total of 3 meetings have taken place. CTTRANSIT proposes modifying existing service to accommodate the need for crosstown service. The proposed route is now Granby Street, Woodland Street, Sisson Avenue, New Park Avenue and will connect Copaco Center with Elmwood Center.
- This route will serve as a ring road, a common feature of transit systems across the globe and will create new transfer opportunities outside of downtown, making the bus system more dynamic and functional. Where this route crosses existing routes, people will naturally be drawn. This route will be a catalyst for economic development.
- This route will connect residents from all across Hartford to...
  - The Super Market and Movie Theater on New Park Avenue
  - The industrial areas along Homestead and New Park Avenues
  - The bus routes to West Farms and Buckland Hills
  - Multiple assisted living facilities
  - Many city schools
  - Saint Francis Hospital
  - The Hartford-New Britain Busway
- A strong region needs a strong transit system. In these tough economic times, it is important not to view HB 5895 as a cost but an investment. By making our transit system stronger, HB 5895 supports the environment, economy and our communities. On behalf of the people of Hartford, I humbly ask the legislature to pass HB 5895.