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March 27, 2009

State Senator Toni Harp, Committee Co-Chair
State Representative John C. Geragosian, Committee Co-Chair
Appropriations Committee
Room 2700, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Governor's H.B. No. 6363

Dear Senator Harp and Representative Geragosian:

I am the President of the Greater Meriden Chamber of Commerce, an organization representing more than 660 member businesses in the greater Meriden area. In addition, the Meriden Chamber also speaks on behalf of all of the 1,500 additional businesses in greater Meriden. I am writing because we strongly oppose the recommendation in the Governor's proposed budget to close the downtown Meriden courthouse. We are asking for your assistance to remove this very damaging language.

There is a delicate balance that exists between our courthouse and downtown Meriden. Without our courthouse, there would be a large gaping hole in the middle of Meriden. In this economy, it is not likely that the building will be filled in any time soon which will further foster many additional holes as our local businesses quickly suffer and eventually perish. If this economic recovery is truly about jobs, we do not want to see any more jobs lost in Meriden.

The courthouse brings in many people who otherwise would not come to Meriden and these visitors are very pleased at how comfortable downtown Meriden actually is. We must remember that people create local foot traffic which contributes to the livelihoods of many businesses in downtown. People create revenue for our City by parking in our city parking lots. People also create a general sense of safety in downtown.

Our downtown courthouse is a full service courthouse like any other courthouse in New Haven County. In addition to the criminal court, the civil court includes divorce court, family court, auto accident cases, housing issues and much more. These are valuable services needed in our community.

It is time that serious attention is paid to the cities in our state. This was the spirit of the Governor's Executive Order No. 15. The language in H.B. No. 6363 in reference to the downtown courthouse Meriden contradicts the good intention of Executive Order No. 15 and the language must be removed. The Meriden courthouse must remain open.

As a Chamber representing the best interests of the Meriden business community and the greater Meriden community at large, we look forward to your support and thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Séan W. Moore', written in a cursive style.

Séan W. Moore
President

Leading and Promoting Business and Community Since 1896

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