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Regarding **SB 828** and **HB 6365**

Honorable members of the Appropriations Committee:

If enacted, Section 1(w) of Senate Bill 828 would transfer to the General Fund $12 million from the Community Investment Act. CIA is an extremely farsighted piece of legislation enacted only four years ago that created a designated revenue stream from a new tax on real estate conveyances to preserve historic homes and buildings, protect farmland and acquire open space, and create affordable housing.

Already, this Act has provided more than $35 million for these specific laudable purposes. Of that total, 16 grants totaling $670,148 have gone to my home town, New Haven, and three of those grants, totaling $132,846, have gone to the New Haven Preservation Trust, of which I am a board member. Loss of this revenue source would be devastating to the Trust. And with the real estate market in marked decline, it is likely that the $12 million a year the Governor would transfer will be ALL the revenue generated from this tax stream.

So as much as I understand and appreciate the Governor's efforts to address the increasing budget deficit and present a balanced budget without raising taxes, and as much as I sympathize with the formidable task you face today, I implore you NOT to decimate the Community Investment Act, but to let that valuable revenue stream continue to preserve historic homes and buildings, protect farmland and acquire open space, and create affordable housing, as it is meant to do.

I also oppose the provision in HB 6365 that would abolish the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism. CCCT was created only five years ago after months and months of careful planning and considerable expenditure – and, guess what? – it really works! Among other things, CCCT staff ably administers the Community Investment Act. Our small state simply cannot afford not to support this essential Commission and the invaluable work it does.

Nancy V Ahern