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To Members of the Commerce Committee:

Good morning. I'm sorry I can't be with you in person, so I'm submitting testimony in support of Committee Bill No. 50 on behalf of Pitney Bowes. Pitney Bowes is a Connecticut company, headquartered in Stamford. Though we are known for inventing the postage meter, we have evolved into a major software company as well as a hardware company. Pitney Bowes is involved in what we call the "mailstream" in over 130 countries.

In Connecticut, we have over 3,000 employees and operations in Stamford, Danbury, Newtown, Shelton, Hartford, and Windsor. Pitney Bowes manufactures large mailing solutions, conducts a significant portion of our research and development activities, performs mailing services for customers, and houses many of our corporate operations, among other activities. The overall printing and mailing industry in Connecticut, including those that work for the United States Postal Service, is responsible for 120,000 jobs.

As a company operating in the worldwide economy, Committee Bill 50 is a constructive idea. Requiring evaluations on: (1) the performance of existing programs and policies and their impact on the economy, (2) the ability of the state to retain and attract businesses, (3) other states' programs to improve the competitiveness of such states as places for business, and (4) programs and policies Connecticut could implement to improve the state as a place for business, would provide a roadmap for policy improvements for Connecticut, benefiting both workers and companies.

From the state's tax structure and its tax incentives to the education system to the infrastructure and overall quality of life, location matters. We strongly believe that Connecticut has an "innovation economy" and many other attributes that deserves to be celebrated. However, we all know that tough times require tough choices. These evaluations could be very valuable for elected officials and the business community as well as we establish priorities and determine the best ways government can create an atmosphere for job growth, research and development activities, and further investment.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Leigh Walton