

Testimony for the record by Eddie A. Perez
Mayor, City of Hartford
Submitted to:
The Connecticut General Assembly
Commerce Committee
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Hearing on HB-5921 An Act Concerning the Retention of Businesses in
Municipalities

Good morning Chairs LeBeau and Berger and members of the Commerce Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB-5921, **An Act Concerning the Retention of Businesses in Municipalities**, or the Fair Aide Bill. I am Hartford Mayor Eddie A. Perez.

Over the past eight years my administration has made the development and retention of business in the City of Hartford one of its first priorities. Through changes in the city's tax structure and incentive and educational programs we have enjoyed great success in creating a friendly environment where large and small business has the opportunity to grow and thrive.

However, despite those efforts, the City of Hartford is too often stymied by the work of Connecticut's Department of Economic and Community Development. In 2007, Hartford lost over one thousand jobs at ING due to a deal cut between the insurance company the DECD; moving ING to a new facility, constructed with state funds, located in Windsor. The City of Hartford was not informed of the incentive package offered ING by the DECD, nor was it given any State support for an alternate site within the City.

Throughout The State of Connecticut the DECD has entangled itself in similar moves, often for reasons difficult to understand. In 2007, Simsbury lost 200 jobs when Hartford Life moved to a new facility due to a DECD deal. As in Hartford, Simsbury was not given a chance to suggest an alternate site within the town.

In 2005, Stamford suffered the largest setback when the giant international importer Diagio was subsidized to move a short distance down I-95 to Norwalk.

This legislation not only promotes greater cooperation between the DECD and Connecticut's 169 local governments; it demands transparency and fairness of the agency and provides municipalities with the opportunity to retain the businesses that we depend on for our economic survival.