



# City of New London

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February 18, 2009

To: Planning and Development Committee

From: New London City Councilor

Margaret Mary Curtin *Margaret Mary Curtin*

Subject: Testimony in support of Land Value Tax Bills  
PSB 379 and PSB 392

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to submit this testimony.

I am a life long resident of New London. Before retiring from State Service, I served as Undersecretary for Intergovernmental Relations within the Office of Policy and Management under the Governorships of Ella Grasso and William O'Neill. I have served on the New London City Council from 1975-1979 and then again from 1997 to the present. I was Mayor of New London in 1977-1978 and 2006-2007. I have, very simply dedicated myself to my community and its citizens well-being.

In my capacity as an elected official and citizen, I am providing testimony to the importance of having the option to use land value taxation. This is not a request to increase the local taxes, nor for additional State spending. On the contrary, this tax would simply allow us the option to shift property tax away from improvements to land. Instead of penalizing people for improving their properties, we would actually be creating an incentive to develop in areas of blight, vacancy and run-down areas. We would provide the incentive to maintain our incredible historical sites throughout the city, and reinvigorate our downtown area.

Such an option does not change the structure of a split tax, and so our ability to manage outcomes and reduce risk is very high with a proven track record of urban turnaround in cities like Harrisburg and Allentown, Pennsylvania where this tax has been in place for decades.

I am not asking for more money from the state in requesting this option. Quite the opposite, this would provide cities like New London with the opportunity to generate revenues where today we cannot. By doing this, and by implementing LVT as a revenue neutral tax, we expect, over time, to become more self-sufficient. Given the current state of our economy and the expectation that this will be a long term process of improving our economic outlook, Land Value Tax can provide help, not just o my city and others, but to the state as a whole by reducing revenue dependency.

It costs the State nothing, and can provide so much for those cities who want to share in contributing to the creation of a prosperous and healthy Connecticut.

Thank you.