



**Testimony Concerning SB 455**  
**ACC The Connecticut Sports and Marketing Corporation**

*Submitted by*  
*Lynn Carlotto, General Manager Arena at Harbor Yard*  
*Member, Connecticut Sports Advisory Board*

Senator LeBeau, Representative Berger and members of the Commerce Committee:

My name is Lynn Carlotto and I am the General Manager of Arena at Harbor Yard. I'm also a member of the Sports Advisory Board formed through the passage of Senate Bill 553. Our Board has met several times over the months. During these meetings, we evaluated the state of the sports industry in Connecticut, along with the opportunities and challenges facing this industry. We quickly and unanimously came to the conclusion that creating a formal sports organization would enable the state to better utilize its combined resources in two major ways: first, to attract additional sporting events to the state; and secondly, to enhance the success of those sports teams and events already in Connecticut.

We identified in the research presented here on February 9<sup>th</sup> that the sports industry has a vitally important economic and social impact on our state. We know that there is a great deal of support for sporting events throughout Connecticut, and that these events mean growth for business

along with positive social and community benefits. It is for this reason that the sports executives and administrators on the Sports Advisory Board have always been actively pursuing sporting events for our venues.

Let me share the impact of these events on Arena at Harbor Yard. In addition to the regular season Sound Tigers AHL hockey games and the Fairfield University men's and women's basketball games, post season collegiate tournaments have been particularly important. In fact, we've partnered with Fairfield University, and recently with Yale University, to present a total of 23 tournament events.

These games have brought 105,091 fans to Arena at Harbor Yard and generated considerable economic impact for Bridgeport and Fairfield County. In the February 9<sup>th</sup> testimony, I presented to you several economic impact case studies. One of them covered the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference Men's & Women's Basketball Conference Championship which took place at the Arena at Harbor Yard in 2007. It is estimated that this event alone generated \$2.1 million for our economy. Without the commitment and diligence of our university partners, in this case Fairfield University, events such as the MAAC Tournament would not have been secured. This fact is the primary reason why I respectfully urge you to alter the current language in SB 455 to include private university representation on the Board of Directors.

In closing, the Sports Advisory Board you so wisely formed has clearly determined that establishing the Connecticut Sports and Marketing Corporation is an important endeavor for our state. Our research indicates this entity will be an important economic driver that will deliver measureable results, including the creation of jobs. In these challenging economic times it is certainly a win-win situation for all. In closing, thank you for your interest in forwarding this most important initiative and considering language changes to the legislation.