

Testimony for the Record  
Eddie A. Perez, Mayor  
City of Hartford  
Finance Revenue and Bonding Committee  
Monday, March 22, 2010  
In opposition of SB 25

Senator Daily, Senator Fonfara, Representative Staples, Representative Perone, Representative Ayala and Members of the Committee. I submit this testimony today against SB 25, AN ACT AUTHORIZING AND ADJUSTING BONDS OF THE STATE FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS, TRANSPORTATION AND OTHER PURPOSES.

Let me begin these remarks by recognizing the budget problems that the State is facing. Cities and Towns across this state have been faced with tough choices for the last few budget cycles and there are few who can empathize with how difficult this situation is more than municipal leaders.

The State is facing a tremendous budget shortfall and tough decisions have to be made, that is a fact. However, in making those decisions, there must be some degree of fairness. There is no fairness in this bill.

SB. 25 targets fifteen projects in Hartford valued at more than thirteen million dollars. Sixteen projects in one community. Thirteen million dollars in lost opportunity for city residents seeking work. I have included a list of these projects as part of this testimony for you to review.

These thirteen projects are not frivolous. The funds directed to them are not handouts. These funds are investments into the future of the city. Money for streetscapes and façade improvement not only improves quality of life, but also increases the assessment of the buildings improved, raising the grand list in the City. Revolving loan funds help small businesses get started and grow, providing jobs and income to city residents. Money for construction projects means jobs for city contractors and residents.

Where other of these projects do not have a quantifiable return on investment, they are necessary for public safety and health. Such as handicap accessibility on playgrounds, bridges over dangerous rivers, and renovations to community centers.

Some of these funds, like the \$1,000,000 for the Public Safety Complex in Hartford are for projects well underway. The Public Safety Complex in particular will service the State and Federal buildings in the City and act as a regional command center in

the event of a catastrophic incident. This project is nearly finished. For the State to retract this funding is almost as if they are imposing a direct tax on City residents.

Tough decisions must be made. Please consider the real consequences of them; the jobs that won't be produced, the assessments that won't grow, and the increase in taxes for city residents. I recognize that some funds will be lost, but please consider the equity in cutting funds from sixteen projects in one community.

I ask that you join me in opposing this legislation. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

### **Hartford Projects Proposed to be Cut**

- **\$1,000,000 for Public Safety Complex** (12052(08)PA 07-7 13(b)(4))
- **\$90,000 for installation of sprinkler playscape at DeLucca Park** (12052(06)SA 05-1 13(d)(22))
- **\$50,000 for handicapped accessible improvements to SAND apartments playground** (12052(06)SA 05-1 13(d)(23))
- **\$1,000,000 for Pope Park** (12052(07)SA 05-1 32(d)(20))
- **\$800,000 for the Artists' Collective for structural improvements** (12052(08)PA 07-7 13(e)(23))
- **\$50,000 for the John E. Rogers African American Cultural Center structural improvements** (12052(06)SA 05-1 13(j)(17))
- **\$1,700,000 for Park Street streetscape project** (12052(08)PA07-7 13(f)(23))
- **\$500,000 for a bridge over the Park River** (12052(08)PA07-7 13(f)(25))
- **\$900,000 for the Hartford Economic Development Corp for a North Hartford Revolving Loan Fund** (12052(08)PA 07-7 13(f)(34))
- **\$500,000 for streetscape improvements along the Main Street corridor** (12052(08)PA 07-7 13(f)(35))
- **\$500,000 for façade improvements on Wethersfield Avenue** (12052(08)PA 07-7 13(f)(45))
- **\$500,000 for Rising Star and Pride Blocks** (12052(08)PA 07-7 13(f)(46))
- **\$3,000,000 for Park Street streetscape** (12052(09)PA 07-7 32(f)(12))
- **\$5,120,000 balance of \$7,000,000 authorization to CCEDA riverfront infrastructure project** (1971(01)PA 98-179 22(b)(2))
- **\$350,000 to Mi Casa for renovations and equipment** (12052(08)PA 07-7 13(i)(15))