



**TESTIMONY OF JOHN SHEMO,
VICE PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
METROHARTFORD ALLIANCE
ON HOUSE BILL 5383, AAC REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MARCH 10TH, 2010**

Senator Coleman, Representative Sharkey and members of the Committee, my name is John Shemo and I am the Vice President and Director of Economic Development for the MetroHartford Alliance. The Alliance is the region's Economic Development Leader and the City of Hartford's Chamber of Commerce.

For the past several years, the Alliance has worked diligently to garner the states support of approving applications to the Department of Commerce to establish Economic Development Districts. There are currently only four states in the US that do not have federally recognized Economic Development Districts

We should remember the regions, not states or cities are the basic units of economic competition in a global economy. Businesses hire regionally, media markets are regional, transportation systems are regional, planning is done regionally. Connecticut has adopted regions to plan and deliver numerous other programs (including workforce, transportation, and tourism).

Many regions in Connecticut are organized to plan and implement economic development programs at the regional level. Several regions have adopted comprehensive economic strategies approved by chief elected officials, the business community and the federal government.

The EDA of the US Department of Commerce advocates the development of Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and the creation of Economic Development District. EDD's are the preferred conduit for the federal

EDA to channel money to support economic development projects and programs.

The CEDS process ensures that regions prioritize their projects, an exercise that promotes the most efficient and impactful use of federal dollars, state dollars and municipal dollars.

This bill will further ensure that regional CEDS compliment the state's economic development strategy.

We are delighted to see this bill raised in this session of the General Assembly and strongly urge your support of House Bill 5383.

Thank you for your attention. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.