

Raised Bill No. 6290

An Act Concerning Economic Development Programs for

Certain Aerospace & Defense Plants

Connecticut General Assembly

Committee on Commerce

Thank you for the opportunity to address you today. My name is Gerald L. Sitko, Economic Development Coordinator of the Town of Cheshire. I am here to speak in support of Raised Bill No. 6290- An Act Concerning Economic Development Programs for Certain Aerospace & Defense Plants.

Last year, a bill was passed by the General Assembly creating a Defense Zone for the Pratt & Whitney property and repair and overhaul facility in Cheshire. This bill was in response to a request from the Cheshire Town Council and Economic Development Commission because we were faced with the loss of a major employer and taxpayer, Pratt & Whitney, which is located in a 294,000 SF building on 50 acres. The issue of having the Defense Zone in Cheshire is important to us since this plant closing will result in a substantial loss of local and regional manufacturing employment and tax revenue. We understand that Raised Bill No. 6290 is a technical change that would correct the effective date in last year's legislation.

The Defense Zone will help Cheshire mitigate the effects of losing a major manufacturer. In effect, it would help us to attract new business development in our effort to put the Pratt & Whitney facility back to productive use.

As no doubt you are aware, economic development is a competitive and serious business. Over the years, Cheshire officials have worked hard to increase the Grand List and lessen the tax burden of residential property owners by bringing business development to the community, region and state. The Defense Zone would assist our business recruitment efforts, as well as those of the State of Connecticut, as we seek new growth opportunities in these difficult economic times.

In conclusion, I greatly appreciate the support of members of the General Assembly in creating a Defense Zone in Cheshire. I thank you for your time and greatly appreciate your consideration of this proposal that would correct the effective date of the legislation approved during the 2010 legislative session.

Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gerald L. Sitko', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gerald L. Sitko  
Economic Development Coordinator  
Town of Cheshire  
84 South Main Street  
Cheshire, CT 06410  
(203) 271-6670