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### Judiciary Committee: Reference SB 1196

As First Selectman and representative of the citizens of East Haddam, I share the concerns of many citizens regarding the conveyance of the seventeen acre parcel adjacent to Eagle Landing State Park in Haddam. I expect the legislature to carefully weigh the concerns of everyone involved.

That said, I am also mindful of the importance and value of developing resources that encourage regional tourism. Our own Economic Development Commission has been working on plans to develop a similar area on our side of the river with our Village Revitalization Committee. The possibility of a small boutique hotel (along with other types of retail) in this area has potential benefits for many of our town businesses, most especially our iconic Goodspeed Opera House.

As I have said in the past, I have known The Riverhouse partners to be good employers and civic partners. They have recently endeavored to be open with us about their plans and process, and stated a willingness to work with us to bring retail traffic to our side of the bridge. They are not outsiders to the community, but local residents who share our concerns about protecting our resources. The First Selectman and every major Board in Haddam has their support, and see their effort as a key component to the redevelopment of the Tylerville area. I believe a prosperous future requires that we all work together.

We can not build East Haddam as an exclusive island. A regional effort is a must to create the critical mass of tourist and visitors needed to produce a steady supply of customers to one of the prettiest river regions in the country!

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Equal Opportunity Employer

