

Testimony of Robert W. Santy, President and CEO, the Connecticut Economic Resource Center before the Program Review and Investigations Committee on RB 1086 AA Implementing the Recommendations of the PRI Committee Concerning the Creation of a Governance Structure to Implement E-Government.

The Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC) actively supports Connecticut's e-government initiatives including the call for the establishment for an e-government board as referenced in Senate Raised Bill No. 1086.

Since 1998, our office has held a state contract to operate the State of Connecticut's Smart Start business registration assistance program and the Connecticut Licensing Info Center (www.CT-CLIC.com), which is a streamlined approach in guiding new, expanding and relocating businesses through the licensing and registration process. The success of the program is directly linked to a collaborative effort in working with all the state regulating agencies. Our office advocates for new solutions for service delivery, emphasizing e-government deliverables by routinely convening and/or communicating with agency contacts. Our experience over ten years of working with agencies indicates that there needs to be a consistent and recurring emphasis on improving service delivery if the state is to keep pace with national trends in e-government service delivery. That is one reason we are pleased to support a newly established e-governing board to lead Connecticut today and into the future.

CERC manages the state's Business Response Center and maintains ProgramFinder – an on-line database providing information on business programs and services available throughout the state of Connecticut. This program is consistent with the stated goal of *providing on-line services for different user groups according to such groups' specific needs*. Our site is client driven – providing information on over 400 programs offered by federal, state and local governments, as well as private sector organizations. It is not driven by any one agency or government mission, but by the needs of the customer.

CERC is the managing partner of the Connecticut Data Partnership. The Partnership is an affiliation of individuals and organizations (both public and private) whose mission is to improve the use of data and information for public policy, strategic planning, program and service improvement and public accountability at the state,

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▶ *Dept. of Economic and Community Development* ▶ *Dept. of Public Utility Control* ▶ *Office of Consumer Counsel* ▶ *University of Connecticut*

regional and local government levels.

Members of the Partnership endorse the following value propositions:

- Indicator and performance data that are critical to the debate and development of public policies and programs should be accessible to all Connecticut citizens and organizations and shared across systems of data collection.
- Connecticut should define and use common standards for collecting, reporting and providing access to data.
- Connecticut data should be collected and made available in ways that support the use of Results-Based Accountability as a core budget and policy tool for identifying the quality of life results desired for all Connecticut residents, determining how well programs are carried out, and presenting the outcomes they achieve for those who use their services. The use of indicator and performance data should be a foundational tool in public policy decision-making in Connecticut.
- Connecticut nonprofits need to have efficient access to baseline social indicator and program data housed in various agency databases. Connecticut nonprofits, which provide vital human services to our citizens and have over 2000 PSA contracts with the State, have limited human resources for data gathering and assessment and are facing a data crisis.

In addition, our office provides consulting services that will inform the state's broadband strategic plan. CERC is providing unbiased and expert advice by using a number of research methods including phone surveys of businesses and residents, focus groups, and best practice reviews. The findings indicate a number of issues regarding how to ensure that all citizens have broad band access as Connecticut moves in the direction of e-government.

The capacity being developed by the partnership to effectively access and visualize data should be a key component of the state's e-government efforts.

Based on CERC's experience in working across state agencies with our programs, we emphasize the importance of the Governor's mandate for agency involvement and support of any e-government efforts. We also emphasize the importance of working with partners outside of government who are not as hamstrung by limitations on use of cutting edge software and data management techniques.

We look forward to actively participating in the state's e-government transformation.