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February 23, 2011

To the Energy & Technology Committee:

I write today in support of Raised Bill 1024, An Act Modernizing the State's Telecommunications Laws.

The Stamford Chamber of Commerce strongly supports a modern regulatory environment that will encourage the growth of technology and increased investment in the State of Connecticut.

According to the state Labor Department, there has been no employment growth in Connecticut for the last 20 years. To make matters worse, a New York economic analysis company released a report in which Connecticut ranks dead last in projected job growth – less than one percent over the next five years. This is unacceptable. As members of the Stamford Chamber of Commerce, we impel lawmakers to improve the circumstances that have led to this economic stagnation.

The cost of doing business in Connecticut is astronomical. Our state's regulatory framework forces businesses of all sizes to jump through bureaucratic hoops to simply perform their basic functions. The Stamford Chamber of Commerce believes that it is imperative for our elected officials and regulators to take stock of the current state of affairs – both in Connecticut and nationwide – and realize that we must encourage business activity in any way possible.

Connecticut is at a breaking point. The road to recovery has been and will continue to be a painful one. As leaders of this state, your options now are to do nothing and remain complacent in economic stagnation or do what we can to improve Connecticut's investment and employment status. On behalf of the over 1600 firms our chamber represents, we strongly hope that you the latter.

The most immediate and effective way to accomplish this goal is to ease the regulatory burden on doing business in Connecticut. Fewer regulations and taxes will remove roadblocks to investment in our state, and more investment will bring more jobs and a

larger tax base to work with – not to mention the improved infrastructure that comes with economic growth.

President Obama made a similar statement in his recent *Wall Street Journal* editorial. He stated that regulations are hindering economic growth and we must make a conscious effort to create a more business-friendly environment. Even FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski, a regulator himself, asserted that state and local regulations are hurting efforts to provide broadband to underserved areas. In Connecticut, we must pay special attention to establish a regulatory environment unparalleled by any other state in the country. Southwestern Connecticut, like the rest of our state, needs to become more competitive.

For two decades, regulation has held our state back from valuable investment. Since 1990, we have exhibited no economic growth, while other states have prospered. For Connecticut to succeed in the future, we must be a driving force in the American economy. For this to happen, we need a 21st century regulatory framework to oversee the intricacies of a 21st century economy.

While employment has not grown, state government spending has increased more than threefold. This is unsustainable. If we do nothing, or continue down the same path of heavy regulation, there will be no jobs for our children in Connecticut, nor an incentive to stay in our state.

The Stamford Chamber of Commerce believes that Connecticut deserves to be at the forefront of the economic recovery. We have the ability to make this a reality. What we need is not more regulation, but to make the regulations that we do have smarter.

Please support Raised Bill 1024, An Act Modernizing the State's Telecommunications Laws and help encourage investment and job growth in Connecticut.

Very truly yours

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John P. Condlin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John P. Condlin  
President and CEO