



**State of Connecticut**  
HOUSE REPUBLICAN OFFICE  
STATE CAPITOL  
HARTFORD, CONN. 06106

*Testimony by Representatives  
Laura Hoydick and Larry Miller  
Before the Commerce Committee  
On House Bill 5266  
February 28, 2012*

Good Chairmen LeBeau and Berger, Ranking Members Frantz and Camillo, and members of the Commerce Committee. For the record the testimony this morning is being presented from both Representative Larry Miller and Representative Hoydick representing the 122<sup>nd</sup> and 120<sup>th</sup> Districts respectively. We offer testimony today in support of HB 5266, AN ACT AUTHORIZING BONDS OF THE STATE FOR THE SHAKESPEARE THEATRE IN STRATFORD.

At one time the Shakespeare Theatre was one of four Shakespeare Theatres in the world. It served as a cultural icon for the Town of Stratford and the surrounding community. It was host to plays such as King Henry IV to Hamlet and was the stage for glamorous actors and actresses from James Earl Jones and Kelsey Grammer to Lynn Redgrave and Katharine Hepburn. John Houseman was one of its first artistic directors. Its rich history is much too long for our time here this morning short to say it was the center of theatre and music for decades.

The theatre has had financial issues since it was cut from the state budget in 1991. The state deeded the property to the Town of Stratford in 2005 and the town has been listening to proposals since then to renovate the theatre. Quite literally no progress has been made since then.

We are testifying this morning to ask that the state make that commitment once again by funding the theatre's renovations and allow music and theatre someday to once again brighten the stage and offer that cultural education for both the young and old. We are asking that the state provide funding to help the Town of Stratford break ground and restore the theatre to its greatness we once enjoyed.

We encourage you to support House Bill 5266. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Rep. Laura Hoydick

Rep. Larry Miller