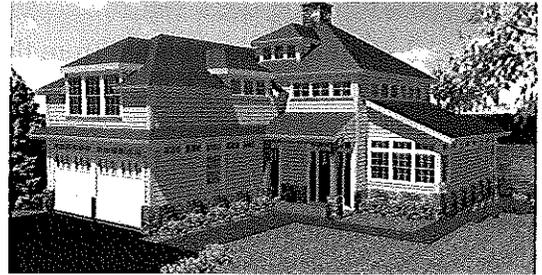


# R.T. ECKENRODE DESIGN LLC CGR/CAPS

FINE HOME DESIGN  
GREEN DESIGN CONSULTATION SERVICES  
3-D DESIGN PROPOSAL DRAWINGS  
DRAFTING /ESTIMATING SERVICES  
CONSTRUCTION PLANS FOR PERMITS  
ADDITIONS /REMODELING AND  
NEW CONSTRUCTION



SEVEN WILDCAT ROAD, NEWTOWN, CONNECTICUT  
PHONE (203) 270-9779 [rtedesign@gmail.com](mailto:rtedesign@gmail.com)

## Testimony of R.T Eckenrode Design LLC

Robert T. Eckenrode Principal  
Before the Commerce Committee

*Item:* HOUSE BILL 5465, AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE OF  
CONNECTICUT'S REGULATORY AND PERMITTING PROCESS

Submitted by: Robert T. Eckenrode  
R.T. Eckenrode Design LLC  
Seven Wildcat Road Newtown, Connecticut 06470

**March 14, 2012**

Attention: Senator LeBeau, Representative Berger and Members of the Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on House Bill 5465: An Act Concerning the State's Regulatory and Permitting Process. As the principal of a residential home design and remodeling company, I respectfully oppose this bill, which threatens to undo important environmental protections. These current protections are important in safeguarding our natural resources and fostering responsible development. As a professional degreed engineer, my business involves residential home design. I am also the caretaker of local natural resources as president of the Newtown Forest Association. I have a unique and comprehensive perspective on development and its impact on our natural environment.

My position is that current DEEP rules and regulations were put in place for sound environmental reasons. Though some of these regulations need further fine tuning to be site-specific, Bill 5465 does not address these issues. It is my opinion that Bill 5465 serves to undermine these rules and regulations to encourage economic development without regard to their potential negative environmental impact. Any retraction of environmental protection laws as they are currently enforced can—and will—have irreversible negative effects on our local natural resources.

The proposed 90-day rule will be used by developers to undermine the ability of short-staffed DEEP professionals and municipalities to properly review and respond to these applications. Each town will now face the prospect of irreversible, adverse environmental impacts due to inadequate backup from the DEEP and public discourse. This bill will lead to less than desirable plans being approved simply because the DEEP does not have time to review them within the 90-day window. The end result will be detrimental to the community. It will also represent a loss of protection for our natural resources statewide. The outright

*See it before you build it.*

recent years, this is the wrong time to repeal flood control measures. Revision of this particular law should be a priority and be site-specific, rather than determined by a state-wide formula.

Broadly, this bill seeks to eliminate safeguards. I believe that this bill is irresponsible and will have a far-reaching, negative impact as well as potentially irreversible negative outcomes. Protection of clean water sources that supply our drinking water—including, ponds, rivers and aquifers—should take precedent over for-profit, private economic development within our communities.

In closing, I do support responsible economic and residential development that meets or exceeds current state and local environmental standards. I also support streamlining the time it takes for well-planned and engineered projects to be approved by the DEEP. We should not be compromising the public environmental protection of our natural resources for the sake of encouraging private commercial and residential development

I urge you to reject HB 5465. It is not the solution to our communities' long term needs.

Thank you for your consideration in this important matter

Sincerely,

Robert T. Eckenrode  
Principal, R.T. Eckenrode Design LLC  
7 Wildcat Road  
Newtown, Connecticut 06470  
[rtedesign@gmail.com](mailto:rtedesign@gmail.com)  
Cell phone, 203-606-9781