

To: Senator LeBeau
Representative Berger
Members of the Commerce Committee

Date: March 14, 2012

Re: Support for Raised **House Bill No. 5466:**

AN ACT CONCERNING SOCIAL ENTERPRISE BUSINESSES”

I am writing in support of Raised House Bill No. 5466.

Following a long career in the computer and communications industries, I became interested, and am involved, in promoting entrepreneurship in Connecticut. As is now well recognized, starting new businesses and growing existing small businesses is the key to creating new jobs and strengthening the economy. Toward this end I deliver programs at the University of Hartford Entrepreneurial Center aimed at both areas. In addition I am an advisor to the Hartford Young Professionals and Entrepreneurs (HYPE) group within the MetroHartford Alliance, act as a mentor to tech startups in the Connecticut Innovations TechStart accelerator program, and facilitate a monthly roundtable for CEOs of small technology companies in the state for the Connecticut Technology Council.

Last year, I was asked to join a committee of the ReSET Social Enterprise Trust, located in Farmington, CT. I was intrigued, and impressed, with their idea that companies, while still pursuing profit as a goal, can also demonstrate a commitment to social responsibility. I've had many conversations with people about the subject and find that there is an enthusiasm for incorporating this type of approach within the business environment.

I have always ended my entrepreneurial programs with a discussion of the moral and ethical aspects of success and the need to recognize that, along the way, other people provided assistance in one way or another. There then comes a time when it is necessary to give back and provide assistance to others. There are many examples of people doing exactly this; but there needs to be more awareness and acceptance of this philosophy – especially for young people just entering the business world.

It would be very powerful to be able to refer to a legal business designation as a “Social Enterprise”. I believe that it would open the door to more discussion about ways to address the seemingly intractable problems which we are facing in the twenty-first century. As we speak; there are activities under way which are aimed at balancing our innovation-based entrepreneurial ecosystem. As we recognize the interdependencies inherent in an ecosystem of this type, what better opportunity to incorporate new ideas and directions which can serve to make our state and nation a better place. Please support House Bill No. 5466.

Thank you for your consideration and do not hesitate to contact me with questions.

Sincerely,

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