

TESTIMONY SUBMITTED TO THE COMMERCE COMMITTEE
March 15, 2012

Catherine Smith, Commissioner
Department of Economic and Community Development

Senate Bill No. 402

**AN ACT CONCERNING A GREEN CHEMICAL INDUSTRY IN CONNECTICUT AND
THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT'S
ECONOMIC STRATEGIC PLAN**

The Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) offers the following comments in support of **SB 402, An Act Concerning A Green Chemical Industry in Connecticut and the Department of Economic and Community Development's Economic Strategic Plan.**

As you are aware, DECD's mission is to develop and implement strategies to increase the state's economic competitiveness. Pursuant to CGS § 32-10, DECD is required to prepare a five-year strategic economic development plan that updates lawmakers and other policymakers on many aspects of Connecticut's economy, including competitiveness. Specifically, the report examines the state's overall economic condition, factors affecting its performance, economic clusters, targeted industries, and the state's economic development structure. Currently, the next plan is due in July, 1 2014.

Senate Bill 402 contains several proposed changes to the legislation without altering its substance or intent. These changes include, but are not limited to, the submission due date, the timeframe, and the scope of the report.

If adopted, the strategic plan would be submitted on or before January 1, 2014, and every four years thereafter. The submission deadline is intended to fall before the General Assembly begins its session and coincide with the gubernatorial election cycle. This will ensure policymakers have the document at the start of the legislative process and can use its analysis to inform policy decisions.

There are also measures to simplify the strategic plan's scope, which will make the document more user-friendly and more instructive. One criticism of the plan when it

was initially submitted was that it contained too much information, that it was almost unwieldy. This proposal will strip out extraneous mandates, making the document more manageable and relevant for policymakers.

DECD believes this change will allow the agency to present a more useful economic strategic plan that will create a true roadmap for economic development in the future.

Thank you for considering the department's comments.