

TO: Senator LeBeau
Representative Berger
Members of the Commerce Committee

Date: March 13, 2012

Re: Support for Raised House Bill No. 5466: **“AN ACT CONCERNING SOCIAL ENTERPRISE
BUSINESSES”**

I support this bill that enables an organization to formally establish itself as a Social Enterprise Business in Connecticut—that is, a for-profit business whose primary purpose is to create a social benefit. Given the struggle our state is experiencing in the nonprofit sector, this social enterprise business structure fills the gap of providing care for our communities, while creating tax-paying jobs for the state.

Without this classification, an organization that wishes to do business for social good must register as a traditional business or a nonprofit. This means that the state is losing tax revenues and relying on donations to address our community needs.

This bill also addresses the transparency that is needed to ensure the businesses in Connecticut are managed with integrity and have an eye to sustainability. It demands a comprehensive review process of officers, the board and a disclosure of salaries.

Connecticut has been losing its promising youth to other states for jobs. I, in fact have three working children, all of whom left for better opportunities in other states. What the young people are looking for are jobs, yes, but jobs that are different than those of their parent’s generation—ones that give back to, not take away from, the community. Social Enterprise businesses are exactly that.

Social Enterprises are growing in popularity and stature across the nation and the world, as the recognition grows of the long-term value and impact of such businesses. By passing this legislation and making our state a business-friendly place for these hybrid organizations, we can make Connecticut a hub of Social Enterprise and put ourselves on the map for creating new jobs and solving social needs.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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