

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 am writing in support of Raised House Bill No. 5466. Social enterprise has a lot to offer the state and citizens of Connecticut. I support this bill because in an era of reduced government spending and greater than ever need, it makes sense to do everything possible to encourage formation of businesses that are willing, at their own expense, to help heal some of our social ills.

Commendably, Connecticut has done much to encourage larger-sized businesses to relocate to the state or to stay here. But small business is the real driver of the economy and barometer of our economic health. This is where most of the state’s jobs are generated and where most our citizens presently work. We need to do more to encourage small business entrepreneurs to set up shop in Connecticut-especially if they are willing to share their profits-in addition to taxes levied –with our citizens and institutions.

Currently anyone wishing to set up as a social enterprise and ensure that their business remains one, must negotiate a legal thicket-and spend a large sum of money in the process—just to ensure they can return some of their profits to our community. In essence, under current law, each new entrepreneur must reinvent the wheel-and pay for it by hiring legal assistance to draft the details. Predictably, such a disincentive will drive would-be social entrepreneurs elsewhere. Instead, the state should do everything it can to encourage these philanthropically-minded entrepreneurs.

Kids coming out of colleges today have greater awareness of social enterprise than their elders. And these are the kinds of businesses they want to work in-social enterprise offers them something to believe in and commit to. It brings meaning and purpose to their work. If Connecticut became a thought leader in the creation of social enterprise, we might not have such a problem with our young people moving out of state to begin or further their careers. And their efforts would help us solve some of the pervasive problems faced by our society. For Connecticut, social enterprise is a win/win proposition.

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

Sincerely,

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