



PEDRO E. SEGARRA
MAYOR

Testimony by Mayor Pedro E. Segarra
City of Hartford
Senate Bill No. 22
An Act Concerning the Capital Region Development Authority
February 21, 2012, 10:00AM in Hearing Room 1D

Chairmen LeBeau and Berger, Ranking Members Frantz and Camillo, Vice-Chairmen Crisco and Haddad and Members of the Commerce Committee:

It is an honor to appear before you today to offer testimony on Senate Bill 22, *An Act Concerning the Capital Region Development Authority*.

I want to start by thanking Governor Malloy, Secretary Barnes and their respective staffs for the vision expressed in this bill. The City of Hartford – Connecticut’s Capital City – has had a special relationship with the state vis-à-vis the Capital City Economic Development Authority. Working together, great things were accomplished, including the development and construction of the Connecticut Convention Center and Science Center, creation of the Neighborhood Revitalization Zones (NRZs)¹ and relocation of Capital Community College to its present location on Main Street. Because of the state’s critical investment in the former “Six Pillars Plan,” Hartford is well-positioned to better integrate, operate and market the assets of Connecticut’s Capital City -- all of which will benefit greatly by a newly constructed governing structure and renamed Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA).

One project in particular that I am especially eager to move forward is the Front Street Development. While some progress has been made, too many storefronts remain vacant and it does not reflect well on Hartford – or the state. It is my hope and expectation that the new CRDA Board will recognize the importance of this project and how it will compliment the several downtown housing projects (of primary studio and one-bedroom apartments) that we have begun to move forward with the help and support of the state and federal governments. In short, I am very optimistic about the opportunities that this new board will advance – not just for Hartford, but for the regional assets that will now fall under the CRDA’s jurisdiction.

It is very important to the future development of Hartford, and our regional partners, that this bill be expedited through the legislative process, thereby allowing sufficient time for the transfer of board authority and provides appointing authorities the opportunity to thoroughly review interested and qualified candidates. I also want to caution the General Assembly and, in particular, the Hartford delegation, to think carefully about delineation of powers and responsibilities and what projects remain individually and collectively under the control and management of the City of Hartford and the State of Connecticut.

Again, I want to thank the Governor and his staff for their recognition and understanding of the impact this entity has not only on Connecticut’s Capital City, but also how critical it is to the overall vibrancy of the region.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and I urge favorable consideration of Senate Bill No. 22.

¹The creation of the NRZ’s was a very important effort that recognized that strong neighborhoods would anchor vitality in the downtown.

