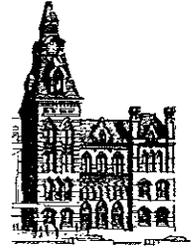




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**John DeStefano, Jr.**  
*Mayor*

**Testimony of the City of New Haven  
Submitted to the Commerce Committee**

*In Support of*  
**SB 121 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROVISION OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES  
TO REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS AND THE AUTHORITY  
TO PURSUE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES.**

*Submitted by*  
Kelly Murphy, Development Administrator  
City of New Haven

Senator Lebeau, Rep. Berger, Sen. Frantz, Rep. Camillo and members of the Commerce Committee, I thank you for the opportunity to support SB 121. Established by Public Act 10-68 Economic Development Districts were established to "coordinate, implement and promote responsible economic growth and activities in this state."

These districts are tasked with developing a strategy "to address identified economic development problems in a manner that promotes economic development and opportunity and housing availability, fosters effective transportation access, improves workforce development, enhances and protects the environment, balances resources through sound management of development, and encourages responsible growth and development."

Recognizing these priorities, it would follow that these agencies should be tasked with implementing these strategies. While current statute makes specific projects in support of these plans available for capital and grants funding, there is no funding stream established to fund these districts to truly regionalize the potential development services.

Funding these Regional Economic Development Districts should be a priority to help promote and attract businesses and to encourage the principals of regionalism and smart growth. As the region's and state economies continue to flounder we must aggressively work to retain and create new jobs, and grow local tax bases. DECD does not have enough staff capacity on the ground to do this state wide and a modest investment in our Regional Economic Development Districts could leverage local resources to maximize Connecticut's economic development potential.

We recommend one minor change in the language that would make development services of the district an eligible expense of the grant funding to attract business and promote job growth and have attached that recommendation to this testimony.

Thank you for your time and for your consideration of this matter.

**N ACT CONCERNING THE PROVISION OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES TO REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS AND THE AUTHORITY TO PURSUE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. Section 32-744 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

The Commissioner of Economic and Community Development [may] shall, within available appropriations, (1) provide economic development services to regional economic development districts, and (2) make priority regional grants to regional economic development districts for municipal development projects \*AND SERVICES\* and for economic development and manufacturing assistance pursuant to sections 8-186 to 8-200, inclusive, and sections 32-220 to 32-234, inclusive.

Sec. 2. Subsection (d) of section 32-742 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(d) [The board of directors of a regional economic development district shall, annually, report to the commissioner and the secretary on progress made in implementing the comprehensive economic development strategy.] A new or revised strategy shall be developed at least once every five years. The board shall submit each new or revised strategy for review and approval in accordance with the same procedure as for a strategy under subsections (b) and (c) of this section.

Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) The board of directors of a regional economic development district shall have the authority to implement any comprehensive economic development strategy approved pursuant to section 32-742 of the general statutes, as amended by this act. Such authority to implement shall include, but is not limited to, (1) entering into necessary contracts with, or (2) accepting grants or other financial assistance from, the state or any political subdivision, agency or instrumentality thereof, any federal agency or from any private corporation, copartnership, association or individual in order to meet any objective or goal of such strategy.

(b) The board of directors of a regional economic development district shall, annually, report to the commissioner and the secretary on progress made in implementing the comprehensive economic development strategy.