

**Testimony On Behalf Of The
Connecticut Regional Office of the
Anti-Defamation League**

**IN OPPOSITION TO
PORTIONS OF GOVERNOR'S BILL 5027**

March 2, 2012

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) was founded in 1913 with a mandate to fight the defamation of the Jewish people and secure justice and fair treatment for all. Today the ADL is one of the country's leading civil rights and human services organizations. The Connecticut Regional Office of ADL is based in Hamden and serves the entire state of Connecticut.

We submit this testimony today to express our opposition to the portion of Governor's Bill 5027 that would merge the Connecticut-Israel Exchange Commission into the Department of Economic and Community Development, and in support of maintaining the Commission ("CONNIX") as an independent entity in Connecticut's state government.

Throughout its history, CONNIX has served an important purpose, fostering and facilitating strong and important relationships between Connecticut and the state of Israel, and between companies in Connecticut and Israel in particular. Trade and other types of relationships between our state and Israel benefit Connecticut economically, culturally and technologically and their value cannot be overstated.

Although we understand that CONNIX has not been funded for several years, its existence and maintenance as an independent Commission continues to be important so that every effort can be made to ensure that its mission continues to be fulfilled, when state or private funding becomes available in the future. In addition, given the challenges Israel faces globally by those who strive to delegitimize its very right to exist, the maintenance of CONNIX sends a message that the state of Connecticut stands firmly with Israel and supports not only its right to exist but recognizes the importance of cultural, economic and other ties with Israel.

We urge you to reject the portion of Governor's Bill 5027 that would merge CONNIX into the Department of Economic and Community Development, and to maintain its important presence as a separate entity in Connecticut's state government.