

# CONNECTICUT STATE LIBRARY



Testimony of  
Kendall F. Wiggin, State Librarian

Concerning H.B. 5027

## “AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNOR’S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE ELIMINATION, CONSOLIDATION AND MODIFICATION OF VARIOUS BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS”

I am here to speak in support of section 47 of H.B. 5027. I have served on the Commission for Educational Technology (CET) since it was created and have been its chair for many years. I was also a member of the Study Committee on Guidelines for the Development of a Strategic Plan for Accessibility to Broadband Services In Connecticut. The committee’s report was recently released by the Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering (CASE) for the Connecticut Office of Consumer Counsel and the Connecticut Public Utilities Regulatory Authority, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. I point this out because the committee concluded that Broadband and its adoption is a major driver of the global economy. For Connecticut to fully benefit from it we need greater coordination among broadband policy makers. The Commission on Educational Technology was constrained from moving past the educational use of Broadband. While access to Broadband services is still critical for our schools and libraries, we need to address the needs of all Connecticut residents. The CET was very successful in developing the Connecticut Educational Network. However, we need to grow the network to accommodate more municipal services. I have heard this many times from municipal officials. We need to address digital literacy, not only in our schools, but throughout the general population. Citizens of all ages need to have the digital skills to effectively navigate the ocean of information to be found on the Internet and to compete for jobs. The state cannot succeed with its eGovernment initiatives if it doesn’t address the need for residents to have high speed Internet access and the skills to interact online with state and local government.

I believe that the Governor’s proposal to reconstitute the CET into the Commission for Technology Advancement will lead to the effective development of a Broadband strategy by greatly improving communication among the key policy makers in the broadband area, focusing resources, and enabling the state and its residents to greatly benefit from what the CASE report calls the “electricity of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.”

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