



JFACT

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Robert D. Lesser
President

March 2, 2012 Testimony before the Government, Administration, and Elections
Committee

Robert K. Yass
Chair

In Opposition to Sec. 33 of HB 5027

Bert Boyson
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Arlene M. Elovich
Vice President

Jason Newman
Treasurer

Alan Stein
Secretary

Robert J. Fishman
Executive Director

Senator Slossberg and Rep. Morin and members of the GAE Committee, my name is Robert Fishman and I am the Executive Director of JFACT, Jewish Federation Association of Connecticut. I am concerned about the Governor's elimination of CONNIX, the Connecticut-Israel Exchange Commission as we know it. CONNIX was established in 1988 and has assisted in growing the amount of business between our state and Israel dramatically. To meet the objectives of State of Connecticut in rapidly increasing our high tech and bio-medical and stem cell research, Israel is a natural partner. An independent Commission has the capacity to work alongside DECD we believe to achieve these goals. Under the Rell leadership, a chairperson was never appointed so CONNIX was not able to continue the good work it started some years ago. However, we would like to work with Governor Malloy to reinvigorate CONNIX with private funding and maintain a close working relationship with DECD. Some states that have close working relationships with Israel today are: New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts and Maryland. Israel in 2009 was the largest non North American country trading on NASDAQ.

**Constituent
Jewish Federations:**

Greater Danbury
Eastern Connecticut
Eastern Fairfield
Greenwich
Greater Hartford
Greater New Haven
Greater Stamford-
New Canaan- Darien
Western Connecticut
Westport-Weston-
Wilton-Norwalk

Last year, in partnership with Metro Alliance, JFACT and the Jewish Federation of Greater Hartford held a very successful Ct./Israel Technology Summit and with interest from surrounding states are planning a larger summit on June 5 which will be a New England/Israel Technology and Security Summit. An active and involved CONNIX we feel would only enhance this type of cooperation. In addition, CONNIX in its current statue includes opportunities for cultural and educational exchanges as well as trade between Connecticut and Israel.

In summary, we hope the committee and the Malloy administration will not eliminate the Connecticut-Israel Exchange Commission.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Robert J. Fishman

The Jewish Federation Association of Connecticut (JFACT) is a statewide Association serving as a legislative representative for the nine Connecticut Jewish Federations and their associated agencies, an advocate for the Jewish Community, a public affairs spokesperson and coordinator on statewide programs on issues of mutual interest and concern in the state of Connecticut and Israel