



Making Great Communities Happen
**Connecticut Chapter of the
American Planning Association
Government Relations Committee**

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POSITION STATEMENT

GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATIONS AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE – MARCH 21, 2012

BILL: RSB 426 An Act Concerning Geographic Information Systems Sharing

OVERVIEW

RSB 426 would require electric companies to provide geographic information and geospatial information systems (“GIS”) data to the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority, which in turn shall make such data available to municipalities and regional planning agencies. GIS data is an important tool for emergency response and emergency preparedness planning.

CCAPA POSITION

CCAPA supports this bill. Recent emergencies in Connecticut have demonstrated the need for better coordination of information among all responsible entities, both for emergency planning and emergency response.

ANALYSIS

An example of the benefit of sharing such data is that knowing where the utility poles are is especially helpful to first responders and emergency management personnel running the emergency operations centers. While some utilities provide on-line maps showing areas where the power is out, knowing pole locations can significantly speed response times by showing first responders where the most dangerous hazards' locations thus allowing police, fire, and medical response crews to plan their routes to arrive quickly and safely to the points where they are dispatched.

RECOMMENDATIONS

CCAPA supports the position of the Connecticut GIS User to User Network, which endorses this bill and provides more detailed explanations of its value to municipalities, regional planning agencies, and emergency responders. CCAPA recommends that the Committee approve this bill and refer it to the Planning and Development Committee for additional consideration of its importance to planning.

CCAPA

The Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association has over 450 members who are governmental and consulting planners, land use attorneys, citizen planners, and other professionals engaged in planning and managing land use, economic development, housing, transportation, and conservation for local, regional, and State governments and for private businesses and other entities. The Chapter has long been committed to assisting the legislature and State agencies with developing and furthering responsible growth management principles. The American Planning Association is an independent, not-for-profit, national educational organization that provides leadership in the development of vital communities.