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DEPARTMENT OF CONSTRUCTION SERVICES

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S.B. No. 426

AN ACT CONCERNING
GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS DATA SHARING

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Government Administration and Elections Committee
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Good afternoon Senator Slossberg, Representative Morin, Senator McLachlan, Representative Hwang and distinguished members of the GAE Committee. I want to thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding Senate Bill No. 426, "An Act Concerning Geographical Information Systems Data Sharing." For the record, I am Jeffrey Bolton and I serve as the Department of Construction Services' ("DCS") representative to the Connecticut GIS Council and have been active in the GIS community for over 17 years. I am here to express support for S.B. 426.

Currently, I serve as the Chair of the GIS Council's Storm Response and Recovery Assessment Group and for four years I served as the Chair of the GIS Council's Critical Infrastructure / Key Resources Subcommittee. The sharing of critical infrastructure GIS data, such as electric utility data and other utility data, has always been a dilemma within the State of Connecticut.

As part of the GIS Storm Assessment Group's work, a survey was sent to the Connecticut GIS Community to receive feedback on how GIS was or not used during the storm events and what if any, were barriers to the effective use of this technology. One key area of concern was the lack of sharing utility data, in particular, electric GIS data and data coordination. As it has been documented, both in our assessment and the Two STORM Panel work, the sharing of this type of information has endless benefits and applications from conducting quicker damage assessments at the local, regional, and state levels, coordination between utility crews and municipal crews for prioritizing responses, to ultimately improving sharing of automated data gathering and analysis.

The proposed language addresses an issue I have been sensitive to which is the proper handling of critical infrastructure GIS data; specifically prohibiting or limiting the disclosure of this type of GIS data. I respectfully suggest that while it may appear to be covered in the proposed language, there should be additional language allowing the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) to share the data with other state agencies and the non-disclosure provision be extended to other state agencies as well.

Thank you for the time and opportunity to comment on this proposed bill.