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From: Sastre, Joe [jsastre@groton-ct.gov]

Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2012 11:51 AM

To: gaemail

Subject: Raised Bill 426 - AN ACT CONCERNING GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS DATA SHARING

As the Town of Groton's Emergency Management Director, I am writing in support of Raised Bill 426, An Act Concerning Geographic Information Systems Data Sharing.

For many years municipal Emergency Management Directors have attempted to obtain geographical information data from our local utility companies to assist us in responding to large scale events and emergencies. Unfortunately we have been unsuccessful due to the possibility that the information, once received from our utility companies, would be required to be released if the local municipality was to receive a FOI request.

The utility companies have been concerned (rightfully so) that information describing the utility infrastructure could be utilized by individuals bent on damaging utility services to their communities. At the same time we, local emergency response officials and our utility companies, have struggled to exchange information in order to restore services following an event due to the lack of being able to converse using a common language. Where local officials deal with street and neighborhood names, the utilities speak in terms of circuits. Having the ability to add their GIS information to our local GIS files will enable us to identify service outage areas and locations more effectively in order to coordinate response and keep our citizens updated on restoration efforts.

This bill, if passed by the Legislature and Governor, will be a major step in our efforts to work with and alongside the utility companies as we improve our collective response to emergencies in our communities.

Unfortunately I am unable to attend the hearing to express my support in person. I thank you very much for the opportunity to express my support of this bill. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me any time.

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