

Carpenter, Matthew

From: Marc Tate [GIS@northstoningtonct.gov]

Sent: Tuesday, March 20, 2012 2:10 PM

To: gaemail

Subject: Legislative Hearing for Bill SB426

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee on Government Administration and Elections.

I submit this testimony as the Director of Emergency Management for the Town of North Stonington as well as a Technology Manager for the Towns of North Stonington and Colchester. I have more than 10 years professional experience with Geographic Information Systems and municipal government operations.

Geographic Information Systems, known as GIS, is a digital mapping technology that has been revolutionizing the way that municipal governments operate. In the past municipal mapping information was difficult to access, manage and update. With the use of GIS technology many municipalities have streamlined access to everything from property assessment information to catch basin drainage layouts. What used to be time consuming and tedious, for example identifying the owner of a piece of property, property boundaries or the area of a parking lot can now be done in a matter of seconds.

Increasing performance and adding new abilities is precisely why I am in support of Bill SB426. The utility information has benefits to many departments in a municipality from the Code Administration to Emergency Management.

Code Administration and other departments would have gains in referencing filed maps and surveys as many reference utility poles but Emergency Management will have the greatest benefit from gaining access to the information.

During the August and October 2011 storms there were many operations that could have been completed more effectively. Communication to Connecticut Light and Power about locations that had issues was difficult and the technicians who did show up did not know how the system was configured or where the infrastructure was. During the storms we created maps with the limited information that we have and they proved to be invaluable. With the utility information added to our own data we can create detailed maps improving the response.

Another major benefit to Emergency Management is the ability to find a location without a GPS unit. None of our emergency service crews or public works crews has a GPS unit. This information would allow field crews to report the location in reference to pole numbers greatly increasing the accuracy of information.

In closing I am in complete support of Bill SB426. It would be a wonderful first step to close the gap of information allowing municipalities to better coordinate with the utility company and would add new benefits.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marc G. Tate
North Stonington Director of Emergency Management
North Stonington GIS/IT Manager
Colchester GIS/IT Manager

3/20/2012