



the tan2000 international holdings corporation
helping others since our founding in 1996 by alan c. tan

Senior Management of the Holdings Company

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David W. Hale Secretary, Chairman and President of the Business Units Group

February 19, 2013

Appropriations Committee
Connecticut General Assembly
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Members of the Committee:

It is our understanding that the Governor has proposed a consolidation of the multiple Advocacy Commissions into a single commission for cost savings reasons. We write this letter to you to emphasize that we believe that this action would weaken the state's ability to focus on economic development when our state needs it the most.

Our Corporation, The TAN2000 International Holdings Corporation, operates a new program that is designed to aid underprivileged entrepreneurs and to give second chances for entrepreneurship to those who otherwise would not be able to do so. In the very short time that this program has been operating, with extremely limited capital we have been able to develop a program that addresses the barriers to entrepreneurship uniquely faced by persons in minority communities. While many would argue that it is possible for a consolidated commission to advocate for those same interests, through our experiences, we would argue that consolidating the commissions into one commission would realize short term savings, but long term economic losses.

The reason why we strongly encourage the State to continue to keep these commissions separate is quite simple. While there are many issues all minority groups face in the area of economic development and prosperity, there are issues that we have found, again through experience, that are specific to each minority community. It is not possible for one Corporation, or even one Commission to deal with these issues that are specific to one community. For example, Asian Americans find themselves having to compete against the Model Minority myth, and Asian American entrepreneurs are discouraged from pursuing artistic and similar types of entrepreneurial ventures. On the other hand, for example, Hispanic American entrepreneurs do not have to face such barriers. This is just one of many examples we have encountered through operation of our program, and we hope by sharing these experiences publicly with the Committee that this will help you all understand that these commissions are, in effect, the State's investment in fostering an entrepreneurial culture here in Connecticut.

The Commissions provide a good partner for corporations who aim to strengthen Connecticut's economy to work with. Rather than target them for very minimal short term cost savings, the Committee should propose that they become mechanisms for connecting with additional potential entrepreneurs. Perhaps legislation should be written to allow for private-public partnerships to enable the Commissions to become a model of economic development for this State and Country. Many minority populations newly emigrated tend to not trust others outside of their community, and this unfortunately is part of the realities of being an immigrant friendly country. It is important for the Commissions to exist because it provides a go-to place for Connecticut's newest citizens to heed advice, learn the ways of our State, and figure out how to positively contribute to their new home. Again, we speak from



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experience, as we ourselves have struggled with reaching out to energetic, minority entrepreneurs who are the next wave of entrepreneurship here in Connecticut.

Giving our newest citizens who have a spirit of entrepreneurship this resource will help the State economically. As we believe it is well known, a majority of jobs are created by small and mid-sized businesses, and the State should be doing everything it can to help our companies who focus on delivering economic development do so. We as a State should be making smart investments here to deliver new life into Connecticut, to support new immigrants who bring new entrepreneurial ventures into our minority communities, to create a win-win environment for our businesses and our citizens.

If our State continues to push down a path where we cut off funding to programs that help us grow for short term political reasons, we collectively as a State have failed each other. We need to make the tough decisions today, through smart investments and smart consolidations to plan for our future. For the reasons we spoke of, we strongly believe that the consolidations of the Commissions is penny wise but pound foolish.

In order to support our state’s citizens fairly and equitably, we need to invest in smart mechanisms to connect jobs with our citizens, and the Commissions provide the State this avenue through the ability to connect with the immigrant entrepreneurs we so badly need here in this State with a globalized economy, which in turn creates the revenue streams that allow the State to help our neediest citizens. We cannot focus on one over the other, we as a State need to balance our short term needs with the long term vision of the Connecticut that we want to be. For far too long our State has kicked the can down the road, and The TAN2000 International Holdings Corporation’s leadership hopes that you, our elected legislators, will make the tough calls to do the right thing regardless of the political consequences.

Sincerely yours,

Alan C. Tan
 Chairman, President, and Chief Executive Officer

Andrew Y. Tan
 Vice Chairman, Senior VP of Innovation, and CDO

Geoffrey N. Spector
 Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

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