Testimony of Mayor John M. Picard  
City of West Haven  

Proposed Bill No. 5016  
AN ACT AUTHORIZING BONDS OF THE STATE  
TO THE CITY OF WEST HAVEN FOR THE WEST HAVEN ARTS CENTER.

Chairman LeBeau, Chairman Perone, and members of the Commerce Committee. Thank you for hearing my testimony today.

I am in support of Proposed Bill No. 5016 which will authorize $1 million in bond funding for the transformation of the old Masonic Hall located in our central business district into the West Haven Arts Center.

In 2007, the City of West Haven purchased the Masonic Hall on Center Street, an early 20th Century Structure located in the heart of downtown West Haven. This purchase was the initial step in the creation of a first-class Arts Center that acts as an effective engine for investment in and redevelopment of downtown West Haven.

Since then, the City has secured and dedicated resources from a variety of partners to move this project forward. The building’s interior has been gutted and all hazardous building materials have been removed or abated. A new, energy-efficient roof has been installed that includes solar panels that will contribute power to the facility. The schematic design phase of the architectural redevelopment has been completed, reflecting the knowledge and talents of local arts agencies and faculty members from Yale and the University of New Haven.

The Arts Center is located only one half-mile from West Haven’s new $100 million train station, scheduled for completion in Spring, 2013. The City is in the process of developing a Transit Oriented Development District Master Plan for the area surrounding the Train Station, and completion of the Arts Center is a critical element to developing a natural link from the Station to downtown West Haven.

The new Arts Center will be home to many artistic endeavors including children’s educational programs, plays, lecture series, local artist displays, rehearsal space for adults and senior civic chorus and orchestra, and will house a summer youth theater program. The Center will be a dynamic environment, constantly displaying new art and artists on a rotating basis, and will serve as an economic draw which will bring people back to our downtown and assist in the redevelopment of area businesses.

I hope you will consider a favorable vote for Proposed Bill No. 5016. Thank you for your time and attention.
Elevations and Sections

West Haven Center for the Arts

North Elevation - Nighttime

Cross Section of New and Existing Buildings

Model Photo - View from Center Street

North Elevation - Daytime