



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TESTIMONY TO THE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE
IN SUPPORT OF HB 5460 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MODEL PLAN FOR
EMERGING BIOSCIENCE AND PHARMACEUTICAL BUSINESSES IN
SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT

March 12, 2013

Senator LeBeau, Representative Perone, and members of the Commerce Committee, my name is Elizabeth Ritter and I am the State Representative from the 38th District, representing the Towns of Waterford and Montville. I am here to support HB 5460 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MODEL PLAN FOR EMERGING BIOSCIENCE AND PHARMACEUTICAL BUSINESSES IN SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT.

Many thanks to the Committee for raising this bill. As you can see, it is supported by the entire legislative delegation from Southeastern Connecticut, and for very good reasons. For decades, SE CT was the home of pharmaceutical research, discovery and manufacture in the state and the region. Pfizer's presence and incredible work led the state in this sector and was an enormous driver of our state's economy. Others followed, thrived, and built a vibrant and reliable business sector. As the economy changed, beginning in the 1990s, first pharmaceutical manufacturing and then, more recently, certain research and discovery divisions left Groton as Pfizer adapted to new challenges and competition in the field.

Today, Southeastern CT presents an enormous potential growth opportunity for us in this area. Many highly educated, successful researchers and innovators remain here. They are committed to staying in Connecticut to raise their families and stay in their communities. They are highly motivated entrepreneurs, ready to continue their work on their own. Many have already had significant success on their own, many are interested in starting, and many are searching for partnerships that will best utilized their talents. This bill will help put it together, create opportunities to

work within the Governor's plans to expand research opportunities at Uconn, and create a highly synergistic environment to support our shared goals in bioscience and pharmaceuticals.

To put it succinctly, we have the people, the brains, the entrepreneurial desire, the experience, UConn at Avery Point – we even have the buildings (left from Pfizer!) – in SE CT, all ready to go. We are asking for clear inclusion in the State's commitment to an economic strategy that will build businesses and jobs and a stronger future for our next generations.

You will be hearing interesting stories from some of these people in support of this effort who make far more compelling advocates than me. Thank you very much for your time and attention. I will be happy to answer any of your questions, now or at a later date.