

SENATOR ANDREA L. STILLMAN

Twentieth District

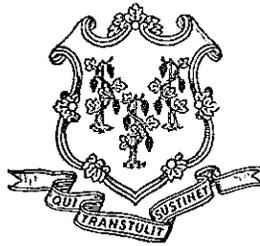
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Testimony in support of HB5460

March 12, 2013

Good morning, Senator LeBeau, Representative Perone, Senator Frantz, and Representative Lavielle, and members of the Commerce Committee. I am here today testifying in support of **HB5460, *An Act Establishing a Plan for Emerging Bioscience and Pharmaceutical Businesses in Southeastern Connecticut.***

As someone who has lived in southeastern Connecticut for 40 years, and has been representing that part of the state for 20 years, I am well aware of the role that research and development companies and jobs have played in the economy of the state. Pfizer has been a player in the bioscience and pharmaceutical industry for over 50 years, and the multiplier effect of the thousands of jobs that were created there has contributed to the economy. Now the industry is changing, downsizing the number of jobs in our area, changing the footprint and eliminating many of the jobs of their researchers and scientists.

This bill will require DECD to develop a plan to help grow new business ideas and keep the bioscience and pharmaceutical industries viable in southeastern Connecticut where so much of it has been nurtured and grown for more than 50 years. This proposal will create a far greater reach for the Jackson Lab proposal and UCONN bioscience initiatives, which I support. The workforce is there, Connecticut needs to take advantage of it, and not allow the continuing brain drain of scientists.

For the past few years I have received many requests for assistance as our great scientific minds that worked in the industry reach out for help. They want to stay in the area and are finding that very difficult. In this new environment many of them are interested in beginning new start-up companies so they can continue to work in their area of expertise. Upon approaching DECD for some state assistance they have been told we would be willing to help but you don't meet our "model", whatever that is. Needless to say it has been very disheartening. These could be scientific breakthroughs being developed using their own personal resources, sometimes taking out another mortgage on their home. Usually the grant or loan needed is small in comparison to many others that we hear about. The most recent one was for only \$100,000 and the potential for success was very high. They persevered, and finally got the grant.

Instead of thinking of the bioscience triangle – Farmington, Storrs to New Haven– think of it as a square and add southeastern Connecticut to the equation. It's a natural fit.

Thank you for your attention and I look forward to your support of this bill.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Andrea Stillman".

Andrea Stillman
State Senator, 20th District