

Testimony of Eric W. Gjede
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Before the Commerce Committee
Hartford, CT
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Testifying in Support of RB 1004 An Act Encouraging The Exportation of State Goods And The Small Business Express Program.

Good Afternoon Senator LeBeau, Representative Perone, and members of the Commerce Committee. My name is Eric Gjede and I am assistant counsel at the Connecticut Business and Industry Association (CBIA) which represents more than 10,000 large and small companies throughout the state of Connecticut.

CBIA supports RB 1004 because it provides a preference for Small Business Express program loans and grants to businesses seeking to enter a new foreign market for the sale of their goods and services.

There are significant cost and time barriers involved in trying to introduce goods or services into new markets. Federal and state programs designed to assist businesses in this endeavor have suffered significant cuts in both financial resources and personnel. In some instances, larger businesses can overcome the barriers to entering new markets by dedicating employees exclusively to these tasks. However, small businesses, such as the ones eligible for the Small Business Express program, often do not have that option available to them.

This bill would fill the void and help small businesses overcome the barriers to entry into new markets for their goods and services. Assisting small businesses in this effort will have a synergistic effect because the more businesses we have involved in exporting, the more places other businesses can turn to for assistance.

Governor Malloy has done a remarkable job of promoting Connecticut's products abroad. CBIA urges the committee to help him in his efforts by giving small businesses a resource that will help them showcase their products and services in other countries.