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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

Betsy Raymond Stevenson
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Senator LeBeau, Representative Perone, and members of the Commerce Committee, I am here to testify in support of HB 5460.

I am an international biopharmaceutical communications executive with 20 years of experience who left Pfizer in 2007 and became an entrepreneur, founding RaymondStevenson Healthcare Communications the same year. I am proud that I have been able to provide work for a number of locally based associates. My clients, which include Merrimack Pharmaceuticals, Novartis Oncology and Sanofi are not local. They are based in Massachusetts, New Jersey and France. I spend half of every week in Boston working with clients and promoting my business. Although it is with regret, it is a matter of time before I will need to relocate my business to be closer to the life science communities where I work.

Yes, biotechnology start-ups need infrastructure and a scientifically literate ecosystem. However, they also need marketing, investor relations and business development expertise, the kind that I and my SE CT-based associates provide, to attract the investment and partnerships essential to sustain and grow their businesses, produce jobs and strengthen Connecticut's economy.

As Jean Schaefer has testified today, the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center, creator of MassBIO, provides a network of experts to biotechnology start-ups, helping them reach the stage where they have the capabilities and the capacity to operate independently. Southeastern Connecticut still has a significant population with this expertise combined with the specialized experience necessary to help biotechnology start-ups attract investors and partners, bringing resources into the region from around the country and around the world.

I am confident that, by taking positive action on HB 5460, the Commerce Committee will be making a small investment for a large return. Therefore, I respectfully request the committee to support this important bill.

Sincerely: Betsy Raymond Stevenson