



SocialEnterpriseTrust.org

20 Waterside Drive | Farmington, CT | 06032 | 860.674.9023

2/20/2013

Michelle Cote – reSET

2/21/13 – Energy & Technology Committee Public Hearing

Raised House Bill No. 6402 An Act Modernizing the State's Telecommunications Laws

**Good Morning,**

My name is Michelle Cote and I am the Executive Director of reSET – Social Enterprise Trust. I am here today to speak in favor of modernizing the State's telecommunications laws.

reSET is a non-profit organization made up of entrepreneurs, educators, innovators, investors and policy makers who are all committed to help making our communities healthier, safer places to live through business. By supporting companies that drive economic growth and improve the quality of life at the same time, reSET aims to help Connecticut's social entrepreneurs and business owners participate as allies with our state's government agencies and robust nonprofit sector in the process of making our communities more prosperous places to live for all of our citizens.

Next month, reSET will open a social enterprise incubator and entrepreneurial support center in downtown Hartford. By creating a space where innovation lives in Hartford, reSET will offer entrepreneurs with the resources they need to bring their business to the next level, and contribute to a dynamic atmosphere of creativity and renewal within our capital city.

I am in favor of modernizing the state's telecommunications laws because I see how new technologies have helped advance the ways in which we communicate with one, and are now fueling new types of economic and social innovation. Through increased interconnectivity and access to information, people all over the world are starting businesses, sharing ideas, inspiring political change and improving lives.

All of these advances, and the further growth in this field is dependent on continued investment in wireless and wireline broadband networks. We want to see accessibility to this type of technology increase, especially here in Connecticut. While looking for a location within downtown Hartford for our new social enterprise incubator, the lack of availability of high-speed Internet access was our biggest limitation. Had we not been dedicated to becoming a partner in our state's economic revival within its capital city, we would have found another location where the availability and cost of these services, was much better.

We count on technology to serve the needs of our state's most promising social entrepreneurs and we believe that Connecticut's telecommunications laws need to be updated to reflect the modern ways in which we communicate in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Traditional phone providers should be free to operate as partners and providers of the best available technologies to Connecticut businesses and social service organizations. Unnecessary, costly and antiquated regulations pertaining to old wireline services impede investment in newer, technologically advanced networks, which would provide much greater public benefit.

Thank you very much for your consideration, and please support the modernization of the State's telecommunications laws.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Cote". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Michelle Cote**

Executive Director

MCote@SocialEnterpriseTrust.org