

GREATER NEW HAVEN

Chamber of Commerce

Bethany Branford Cheshire East Haven Guilford Hamden Milford New Haven North Branford North Haven Orange Wallingford West Haven Woodbridge

Testimony of the Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce to the General Administration and Elections Committee March 25, 2013

Senator Musto, Rep. Jutila, members of the General Administration and Elections committee, I write to you today on behalf of the Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce (GNHCC). We represent businesses in the municipalities of Bethany, Branford, Cheshire, East Haven, Guilford, Hamden, Madison, Milford, New Haven, North Branford, North Haven, Orange, Wallingford, West Haven, and Woodbridge. We aid the local business community by advocating to help achieve sustainable economic growth for Connecticut. It is for this reason that I write to express concerns with aspects of SB 5, **An Act Concerning Changes to Campaign Finance**.

The first concern is the new requirement to disclose the source and amount of dues payments as stated in Section 8 of the bill which modifies Conn. Gen. Stat. 9-612(e)(6). This change is especially worrisome considering it is rare for many organizations to disclose their membership lists and dues payments. Yet, the language requires entities to disclose the source and amount of dues payments if the entity makes campaign-related disbursements out of its general treasury. This new mandate infringes on the proprietary information of organizations without justification. Information regarding membership and dues payments belongs to the applicable entity – not the public.

Furthermore, membership and dues dollars must be distinguished from donations. Membership and dues dollars do not necessarily equate to campaign related expenditures and therefore such relationships must not be assumed. Rather, dues dollars must be handled differently and should not be disclosed simply because donations specifically received for campaign expenditures have been spent. Disclosing membership and dues payments when such information is not related to campaign expenditure is not justified or reasonable.

Reporting Timetable Cut In Half:

The Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce is also concerned about the shortened time frames for reporting independent expenditures as modified in Section 8 of the bill (modifies Conn. Gen. Stat. 9-612(e)(2)). This section cuts the reporting time in half, from 48-hours to 24-hours, for independent expenditures made/contracted more than 90 days before a primary or election and then also cuts in half the time to report from 24-hours to 12-hours independent expenditures within 90 days of a primary or election. These extremely short time frames will be very difficult to comply with.

Thank you for your consideration.



Anthony P. Rescigno
President

Written
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