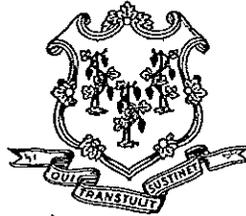


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February 22, 2013

Good morning Senator Musto, Representative Jutila, and Members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee. I would like to offer testimony and recommend changes to two bills: SB 206, AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PILOT PROGRAM TO ENCOURAGE THE PARTICIPATION OF MINORITY-OWNED AND WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES IN STATE-FINANCED CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS AT SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY and SB 284, AN ACT CONCERNING THE PERCENTAGES OF CONTRACTORS AND SUBCONTRACTORS WHO ARE MINORITIES OR WOMEN UNDER THE SET-ASIDE PROGRAM.

My intention when proposing these bills was to address the diversity (or lack thereof) within the workforces of contractors who received state contracts rather than the diversity of the state contractors themselves. However, the bills as drafted address only the diversity of the contractors themselves which I would also support. I proposed these two bills because I have learned that the City of New Haven has more demanding standards regarding the diversity of the workforce for contractors holding contracts with the city than the state does for its contractors. The city also has enforcement mechanisms and staff that the state does not. While I believe that a transition toward the New Haven workforce standards would be beneficial for all state

contracts, I also believe that a pilot project at Southern Connecticut State University would be an excellent place to begin, especially if the state could use the already in place staff at the city. This issue is particularly important for state contracts in urban centers; the diversity of the contractors' workforces should attempt to mirror the diversity of the city's residents. It was evident during the Gateway construction project in New Haven that the actual workforce diversity was minimal. I have attached the statistics from the Gateway project. I have also attached the proposed bill requests as I submitted them to LCO.

The bills as currently drafted would require that the state use New Haven's set aside rules which also differ from those of the state. The city separates minority from female contractors, a policy which might be beneficial for the state as well. This was not, however, the issue I was intending to address.

Thank you for hearing bills on this important subject.