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Helen Higgins
Executive Director

February 11, 2014

Appropriations Committee
Senator Beth Bye, co-chairman
Representative Toni Walker, co-chairman

RE: Governor's Bill 5030
Department of Economic and Community Development

Testimony of Helen Higgins, Executive Director, Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

My name is Helen Higgins, and I am Executive Director of the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation. The Trust is Connecticut's non-profit statewide preservation organization, established by Special Act of the Connecticut General Assembly in 1975 (SA 93-75). It is committed to protecting and nourishing the vitality of significant buildings and landscapes through grants, loans, on-site technical preservation assistance, educational programs and publications.

I am testifying in favor of the Governor's proposed line item to the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation for \$199,896. These funds are used for Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Grants throughout the state. The amount proposed is a 20% cut from our original appropriation of \$250,000.

Last year, our grants leveraged 2 times the amount awarded (\$189,000) to non-profits and municipalities across the state (almost \$400,000) for preservation planning projects that contribute to economic development and cultural heritage tourism. For example, in 2013 the Connecticut Trust gave grants to the Greater Hartford Transit district to study needed repairs Union Station; to Scranton Library in Madison to plan for re-use of three historic buildings it owns; to Indian Hill Cemetery in Middletown to study how to rehab the chapel; to the Bushnell Park Foundation for plans to restore the Arch, to Neighborhood Housing Services in New Haven for the extension of the National Register district at the Winchester Arms site, allowing the redevelopment of the site to be eligible for federal historic tax credits, to Greater Litchfield Preservation Trust to help with planning restoration of a major downtown building. In all, over 100 short term jobs were created. This small state investment has wide impact and I hope you will agree it is worthy.

Thank you.