



Connecticut Commerce Committee
March 11, 2014 Public Hearing

Testimony in favor of
SB 302 AN ACT CONCERNING AN ENTREPRENEUR IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM.

Good afternoon Senator LeBeau, Representative Perone, Senator Frantz, Representative Lavielle, and distinguished members of the Commerce Committee. I am Dawn A. McDaniel, Executive Vice President of the Connecticut Veterans Chamber of Commerce. The Connecticut Veterans Chamber of Commerce seeks to foster growth and opportunity for veteran-owned businesses and veterans transitioning to the workforce.

The Connecticut Veterans Chamber of Commerce represents the voice of over 42,000 veteran owned businesses in the state, accounting for 8% of the state's GDP. Studies have shown that veterans operate successful businesses and are more likely to hire veterans. Over the past four years, the UConn Entrepreneur Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities has invested \$1.2 Million into veteran-owned businesses, which has resulted in \$7 Million in gross revenues and workforce opportunities.

We support state legislation that lowers barriers to entry to business ownership, economic reintegration, workforce development, and transition to the civilian sector. Strengthening Connecticut's laws to support entrepreneurship and job creation is the best chance we have for growing our state's population and economy. We support Entrepreneurs in Residence at state agencies.

We urge the committee to establish goals to provide support for veterans and veteran owned businesses by setting goals for one of the entrepreneurs in residence to be a veteran and reside at the Department of Veterans Affairs. This program offers a great opportunity to improve outreach for veterans, while supporting and encouraging veteran entrepreneurship.

We appreciate the committee's efforts to provide opportunities for business owners. We urge the committee to seek out opportunities to include veterans in business and workforce development initiatives throughout the session, and we look forward to serving as a resource to the committee. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony, and we are available to answer any questions.