



**Testimony of Elliot Ginsberg
Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology, Inc.
Before
Planning and Development Committee
March 21, 2014
Regarding**

**Raised Bill No. 5584 - An Act Concerning Regionalism and Making Technical Changes
to Statutes Concerning Municipal Tax Collection.**

Members of the Planning and Development Committee, my name is Elliot Ginsberg, and I am the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology, Inc. (CCAT). I am appearing in support of Raised Bill No. 5584, specifically its provisions to extend assistance to Connecticut's Regional Councils of Governments through the development of pilot programs to demonstrate information technology (IT) applications using Connecticut's broadband Nutmeg Network.

CCAT is excited about our partnership with the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) to provide the opportunity to increase the efficiencies of municipal day-to-day operations and generate costs savings for municipalities statewide through the regionalization and utilization of the Nutmeg Network.

For Connecticut municipalities to be efficient and effective today they must move beyond an operating system based on paper flow and files to a digital environment that provides not only speed and efficiency but also critical disaster recovery and security.

Today we communicate and operate in a digital world and the citizens of our municipalities expect us to provide extensive online access. It is time to incorporate advanced information technology systems and applications into town management. Our towns and cities need to individually and collectively incorporate IT-based communications and management systems into their operations.

If they do not, they will be left behind, severely hampered in their ability to perform mounting day-to-day work, let alone function during a crisis situation.

CCAT has been at the forefront of this transitional effort, providing IT services such as virtual desktops, infrastructure as a service, and data backup and disaster recovery to schools, cities, towns, and libraries via the Nutmeg Network for the past five years. Originally established for connecting schools and libraries, the broadband fiber optic Nutmeg Network has proven to be a reliable and effective means of delivering these services and high-speed Internet access. This bill supports a logical – and in today’s world, essential – expansion of its use to deliver government services at the town, city and state levels.

Under this project, CCAT will partner with CRCOG to address:

- Developing a regional data and disaster recovery center
- Developing pilot programs that include:
 - Storing equipment at the regional data and disaster recovery center for the purpose of live broadcasting of municipal meetings;
 - Electronic document management systems;
 - Voice over Internet protocol for websites, video conferencing;
 - Customized, host software solutions and virtual environment for data storage;
 - Custom software to coordinate board of education and municipal payrolls; and
 - An online portal for municipal human resources services.

CCAT applauds the intent of this legislation to further strengthen Connecticut’s municipalities. The bill, through support by this committee, will enable our cities and towns to effectively leverage IT technology to improve delivery of services to the residents they serve.

As a non-profit organization, we understand the importance of fiscal responsibility and need for cost containment. We live it every day. We believe that our extensive experience working with municipalities, schools and libraries, our depth of IT expertise, and our recent recognition as a preferred provider of IT services by CRCOG make us well-prepared to team with CRCOG in this effort. However, we recognize the large scope of this effort and will bring together private sector IT

and application development companies to ensure the timely completion and implementation of all aspects of the project.

With CCAT's depth in technology leadership and synergy with our existing national and state-focused initiatives, we bring even greater value to this project. Leveraging the expertise and cutting-edge technology at our Advanced Manufacturing Center, our collaborative education initiatives promoting science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), our workforce development programs with the US Department of Defense, and our relationships with the Connecticut Community College System and state Workforce Investment Boards, CCAT provides resources for helping Connecticut municipalities solve current problems and prepare for future growth. Further, through our assistance to entrepreneurs in advancing new technologies as part of our Technology Incubator, CCAT is primed to bring new business opportunities to municipalities statewide.

In summary, Raised Bill No. 5584 provides the opportunity to build on the success of Connecticut's significant investment in the Nutmeg Network. Presently, approximately 97 of the state's 169 towns and municipalities are currently connected, or in the process of connecting, to the network. This is the time to help municipalities transition to the fiber optic network and leverage this valuable resource. CCAT believes that the provisions detailed in Section 10 will serve to strengthen our cities and towns, further economic development and position Connecticut as a leader nationwide.