



Toni N. Harp  
Mayor

**City of New Haven**  
**Office of the Economic Development Administrator**  
**165 Church Street**  
**New Haven, Connecticut 06510**



Matthew Nemerson  
Economic Development  
Administrator

**Commerce Committee**  
**February 19, 2015**

Representative Perone, Senator Hartley, and members of the Commerce Committee, I'm Stephen Fontana, Deputy Director of Economic Development for the City of New Haven, and on behalf of Mayor Toni N. Harp, I wish to testify on two bills: **HB 6596**, AAC Main Street Committees, and **HB 5662**, AAC A Transit-Oriented Development Authority In New Haven.

**HB 6596** would authorize the issuance of \$10 million in bonds to support economic redevelopment in cities of more than 100,000 people that choose to adopt the "Main Street" approach. This specific, four-part methodology, designed by the National Main Street Center and supported by our own Connecticut Main Street Center, focuses on bottom-up, collaborative efforts by residential and business stakeholders to revitalize their neighborhood commercial districts. In Connecticut, towns from Darien to Putnam have successfully used this approach to improve their central business districts.

In New Haven, we already have used the Main Street approach to reinvigorate Westville Village, and we are applying it now to the Whalley, Grand, and Dixwell Avenue corridors as well. HB 6596 would give us access to resources to pursue infrastructure or promotion projects that will catalyze increased economic activity in these areas. **We therefore respectfully request that you support HB 6596.**

**HB 5662** would create a new development authority in New Haven, akin to the CRDA here in the Hartford region, to implement transit-oriented development around Union Station. This authority would provide New Haven with the same invaluable opportunity that Hartford enjoys, to shape development within its boundaries based on the expressed interests, needs, and wishes of its residents and businesses.

New Haven, like every other community in Connecticut, over time has developed a clear and well-defined ability to decide for itself what kinds of development it does and does not want. This value applies particularly strongly to shared regional assets, like our train station, which annually draws hundreds of thousands of passengers through its doors.

In light of the Governor's proposal to renovate Union Station and construct a new parking garage adjacent to it, he and we clearly share many of the same goals for redeveloping Union Station and its immediate environs. To the extent that our vision for its redevelopment includes other design elements, however, we believe that state development interests should not supersede our shared belief in local control.

Last year, we developed language to create an authority pursuant to this vision. If the Committee wishes, I would be happy to supply it with this language for its review.

**We therefore respectfully request that you support HB 5662.** Thank you for your consideration.



InfoNewHaven.com

203. 946.2366 Phone / 203. 946.2391 Fax