



State of Connecticut

African-American Affairs Commission

State Capitol

210 Capitol Avenue – Room 509

Hartford, CT 06106

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Senator Hartley, Representative Perone, Senator Criso, Representative Vargas, Senator Franz, Representative Camillo and other distinguished members of the Commerce Committee. My name is Subira Gordon and I am the legislative analyst for the African American Affairs Commission. The mission of the African-American Affairs Commission (AAAC) is to improve and promote the economic development, education, health and political well-being of the African-American community in the State of Connecticut.

I am here today to support HB 6827 AAC the small business express program and underserved communities. This bill will expand the small business express program and make loans available for small companies. The change to lower the minimum loan amount to 1,000 from 10,000 will open up the program to businesses that are much smaller which includes many minority businesses in the state. The current portfolio for minority businesses in the program sits at 8% and that includes all minority owned businesses. The AAAC would like to see this number increase and we think that this change will be a step in the right direction.

Line 117 in the bill allows the commissioner of DECD to work with community leaders to identify underserved populations in municipalities with a population greater than 70,000 which will include the major cities in the state that all have a high percentage of the population being minority. The AAAC extends itself to be able to work with the commissioner on this project as the commissioners on our board hail from all counties in the state and with one our legislative

charges being economic development we would welcome the opportunity to be a part of this initiative.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify today.