



State of Connecticut

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Testimony

HB 6367 AN ACT CONCERNING A CHANGE TO THE BOUNDARIES OF THE GROTON-NEW LONDON AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT ZONE.

Transportation Committee

February 2015

Senator Maynard, Representative Guerrero, Senator Boucher, Representative O'Dea and fellow members of the Transportation Committee, I write in support of HB 6367, an Act Concerning Changing the Boundaries of the Groton-New London Airport Development Zone.

Unlike most airport development zones, the 2-mile radius surrounding the center of the Groton-New London Airport falls mostly in the Thames River, Long Island Sound and protected, undevelopable open-space, defeating the intended purpose of the designated zone. While state allows for the Connecticut Airport Authority to establish an airport development zone, state law doesn't allow the CAA to shift a zone from the center of an airport. By shifting the ADZ to encompass new territory Groton and establishing a portion of the ADZ in New London, it will enhance the economic vitality of both municipalities and the entire region.

The proposed zone would encompass much of Eastern Groton, home to manufacturing giant, Electric Boat, maker of the U.S. Navy's nuclear submarines, as well as a bioscience cluster anchored by Pfizer. The zone would now include New London, ranging from Fort Trumbull to downtown New London's central business district to State Pier. Currently, an ADZ permits an exemption on the property's assessed value on improvements (or buildings) for five years and fully exempts the personal property tax on manufacturing machinery & equipment.

It's undisputable that Groton and New London serve as Southeastern Connecticut's epicenter for commerce. While most of the state has seen moderate economic growth over the past few years, Southeastern Connecticut's economy vastly underperforms compared to the rest of the state. In fact, The New London-area economy has only recovered 10.5% of jobs held prior to the recession. By extending the zone into areas with the greatest need for economic growth, it provides another tool to municipalities to sell our region as a place to do business to prospective companies, entrepreneurs, and future residents. Southeastern Connecticut needs to foster a more diversified business environment, and this legislation achieves this.

I respectfully implore the Transportation Committee to support HB 6367.