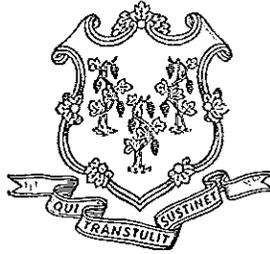


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Transportation Committee

Commerce Committee
February 10th, 2015
LOB 2D
10:30 AM

In **SUPPORT** of Proposed Senate Bill 544
An Act Authorizing Bonds of the State
for the Eastern Connecticut Performing Arts Association

Chairwoman Hartley, Chairman Perone, and distinguished members of the Commerce Committee, thank you for hearing SB 544. I am here to testify in **support** of **Proposed Senate Bill 544**, *An Act Authorizing Bonds of the State for the Eastern Connecticut Performing Arts Association*.

The Eastern Connecticut Performing Arts Association (ECPAA) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit arts organization, composed of performers, artists, and prominent local business people who seek to improve the state of the arts in Griswold and surrounding communities, including Brooklyn, Killingly, Jewett City, New London, Norwich, Putnam, Plainfield, and Sterling.

To quote a portion of their mission statement, the Eastern Connecticut Performing Arts Association seeks to “engage, entertain, inspire, and challenge audiences with high quality, professional, and innovative theatrical productions that range from the classics to new works”. In addition to these productions, the ECPAA’s Education Department also offers year-round theatre education classes and workshops that provide people of all ages with an artistic outlet.

It is the goal of this legislation to provide a \$500,000 grant-in-aid to the ECPAA for the purpose of renovating and remodeling an existing theater on Main Street in Jewett City. Modeled after the success of the Bradley Playhouse in Putnam, this project will have positive and far-reaching economic development benefits for Eastern Connecticut, chief among them: construction-related jobs, increased tourism, and downtown redevelopment opportunities in Griswold.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 544.