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Dear Members of the Planning and Development Committee.

My name is Thomas White. I reside at 446 Savoy Street in Bridgeport, Connecticut.

I ask that you support House Bill 5886, an amendment to CGS Sec. 7-421 entitled AN ACT PROHIBITING MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES FROM SERVING ON CERTAIN MUNICIPAL LEGISLATIVE BODIES.

CGS Sec. 7-421 includes a provision that allows municipal employees to serve on municipal legislative bodies in which the employee resides except land use boards and boards of finance.

In 1988, the City of Bridgeport revised its City Charter in a voter referendum. It included dissolving its Board of Apportionment and Taxation (Board of Finance) and moving those powers and duties to the Bridgeport City Council. As a result, the role of the Bridgeport City Council includes the role of a board of finance. CGS Sec 7-421(e) prohibits municipal employees from serving on the board of finance of the town where they reside.

HB 5886 is an amendment of this statute, extending this prohibition to situations where the municipality's legislative body has the role of a board of finance. The Bridgeport City Charter prohibits Bridgeport city employees from serving on the Bridgeport City Council. This prohibition is not enforced because CGS Sec 7-421 allows municipal employees to serve on city legislative bodies.

While municipal employees are prohibited from serving on boards of finance in their Connecticut town, Bridgeport has been an exception, in that municipal employees serve on the City Council which has the powers and duties of a board of finance. This bill may be labeled incorrectly by some as a 'Bridgeport bill'. In reality, the bill's intent is to make the rule that applies in all towns in Connecticut through State Statute, apply in Bridgeport as well. If an impacted town objects to this amendment, the statute currently includes options for them to consider.

I urge Planning and Development Committee members to support this bill and endorse this effort to address conflict of interest in all Connecticut towns as intended by CGS Sec 7-421 (e). Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Thomas J. White