



## CONNECTICUT

**TESTIMONY OF  
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS (NFIB)  
CONCERNING  
HB-6851, AAE THE CONNECTICUT TRANSIT CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
MARCH 6, 2015**

*A non-profit, non-partisan organization founded in 1943, NFIB is Connecticut's and the nation's leading small-business association. In Connecticut, NFIB represents thousands of members and their employees. NFIB membership is scattered across the state and ranges from sophisticated high technology enterprises to "Main Street" small businesses to single-person "Mom & Pop" shops that operate in traditional ways. NFIB's mission is "To promote and protect the right of its members to own, operate, and grow their businesses." On behalf of those small- and independent- job-providers in Connecticut, NFIB/Connecticut offers the following comments:*

**Regarding HB-6851**, NFIB/Connecticut has concerns specific to the condemnation powers that would be vested in this new authority to acquire real property within their jurisdiction as set forth in the bill (See Section 2 (c)(1)(A), line 191 et seq.). Vesting eminent domain authority in this new government body worries small business and property owners who find themselves within a half-mile radius of any transit station, "operational, *or for which the department has initiated planning or that is included in the state-wide transportation investment program* [emphasis added]." (See lines 18-20). While NFIB/Connecticut and small business owners at large are supportive of transportation initiatives, transit oriented development projects, and general economic development within and outside of transit corridors, it is concerning that government condemnation authority, which has the potential to change the landscape and scope of businesses within a certain area, would have to be used for economic development purposes in lieu of private market investments/incentives. Ever since the 2005 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Kelo v. the City of New London*, NFIB has been on the forefront of the eminent domain issues, fighting alongside small business owners and homeowners to prevent their property from wrongful takings. Here in Connecticut, support for restricting the government's power of eminent domain resonates soundly. Results of past NFIB State Member Ballots indicate a majority of our small business owner members favor restricting eminent domain powers. Eminent domain forces small businesses to relinquish their assets, often without full compensation for subjective, but nevertheless substantial, harms—including relocation expenses, business goodwill, legal expenses and the cost of replacing condemned property. Losses related to condemnation and undervaluation impose special hardships on small businesses, which may be unable to reopen, recoup losses, or may fail in a new location. Vastly expanding government condemnation powers to a new authority would only exacerbate these problems and could potentially adversely impact many small businesses, some who may not even realize they are located within a "development district". Thank you for the opportunity to comment.