



Testimony of Eric Brown
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Connecticut Business & Industry Association
before the
Commerce Committee
March 15, 2016

RE: Bill No. 445 An Act Establishing a Bioscience and Health Data Network Collaborative Task Force.

CBIA opposes this bill.

Good afternoon. My name is Eric Brown and I serve as counsel on environmental, energy and regulatory policy for the Connecticut Business & Industry Association (“CBIA”). CBIA is proud to represent thousands of small and large businesses throughout Connecticut, employing hundreds of thousands of Connecticut citizens.

CBIA appreciates this committee’s desire to retain Connecticut’s position as having one of the very best broadband networks in the nation. Unfortunately, a few isolated incidents have spurred some to mistakenly conclude that our broadband network is “not what it needs to be” today – and in the future.

SB-445 is the latest bill to convey the unfortunate impression that Connecticut’s broadband system is lacking and in need of public-sector scrutiny and involvement. Specifically, it infers that a 9-person task force is needed to develop a strategic plan for the private development of an ultra-high-speed broadband network (which we already have) - a task force that includes a total of ONE telecommunications professional.

With several of the world’s top telecommunications companies, employing hundreds of Connecticut engineers and other telecommunications experts whose job, in part, is to develop and implement strategic plans that forecast future needs, produce continuous innovation and budget millions of dollars in network investment, it is difficult for us to rationalize the need for this bill.

Our system is not perfect. There are some isolated pockets that present significant challenges. But we have the best companies in the world working to address these challenges. Connecticut should be touting our broadband system as a significant competitive advantage for our state. And we should stop entertaining the idea that the current and future health our world-class broadband network is in jeopardy without having the government, which has a dismal track record when it comes to information technology management, insert itself into the private sector’s strategic planning process.

CBIA urges the commerce committee to reject HB-445, and we thank you for this opportunity to provide comment.