



**Testimony of Eric Brown
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Connecticut Business & Industry Association
before the
Environment Committee
March 4, 2016**

RE: S.B. No. 229 AN ACT CONCERNING THE ACCURACY AND APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT EVALUATIONS

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.

This bill seeks to amend the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act by allowing a petition signed by one hundred or more members of the public to force potentially substantial delays in the commencement and completion of economic development projects in Connecticut.

This Act, along with the Connecticut Environmental Protection Act, are foundational environmental statutes that seek to strike an extremely delicate balance between state interests in economic development and environmental protection. They are not statutes to be modified lightly.

SB-229 would introduce a major disruption to this balance by allowing any entity that wished to potentially scuttle any economic development project involving the state simply by assembling a list of signatures. If the committee feels a need to respond to whatever the basis of concern this bill is intended to address, we would strongly urge that the “shall” in line 7 be changed to a “may” and the language adjusted to provide the commissioner with the discretion to consider remaking the environmental impact evaluation.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment and for your consideration of our testimony.