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Testimony submitted to the Planning & Development Committee
for the public hearing on March 11, 2016

on **SB-328**: An Act Concerning Municipal Applications
for Land Use Permits and Tax Abatements.

Members of the Planning and Development Committee,

I **support** SB-328, provided the **following changes** are made:

Section 1. (a): change the language to reflect that a municipality **must require** an applicant to provide detailed disclosures regarding the nature of their applications. Right now, section 1. (a) states a municipality **may** require detailed disclosures.

Section 1. (b): change the language to reflect that a municipality **must require** that an applicant update any change in the information specified in Section 1. (a). Right now, section 1. (a) states a municipality may require an applicant to update any change.

Section 1. (b): Also, change the language to specify what is meant by a reasonable time to update any change in the information by **spelling out the number of days or weeks** by which that must be completed. Right now, the term "reasonable time" is too vague.

There is no place for secret negotiations that involve land-use or tax abatements in Connecticut's cities and towns. Citizens and taxpayers should have the same information that municipalities have regarding the real identity and exact business nature of an applicant, property owner, or developer. Without this information, there is no way for residents to judge the merits, or perils, of a project.

Land use and tax abatements require serious consideration and have lasting impacts. By **passing** this bill **with the above changes**, residents will at least have a chance to thoughtfully consider whether proposed projects are right for their communities. After all, taxpayers will be the ones funding tax abatements. Without full disclosure at every step of the process, we can't evaluate whether the benefits outweigh the costs of tax giveaways.

Don't let applicants, property owners, or developers hide behind a shroud of secrecy. The public has a **right to know** who wants to build in their city or town, what they want to build, and any consequences of where they want to put it. It's not too much to ask for in a democracy.

I urge you to support SB-328 with the above changes.

Thank you for your consideration.