



Testimony of Paul Recanzone
President OHivey
Director Fiber Community

In Favor of Proposed Bill:

HB No. 5636 – AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL TAXING DISTRICTS, THE SALES TAX, THE APPRENTICESHIP TAX CREDIT, CERTAIN FEES AND THE TAX CREDIT REPORT

Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee

22 March 2016

Senator Fonfara, Representative Berger, and distinguished members of the committee;

Thank you for understanding the importance of broadband development to economic vitality and quality of life in Connecticut.

OHivey and Fiber Community believe communities can be greatly benefitted by public broadband development projects. We also believe the decision to risk public funds on a local broadband development project should rest in the hands of those citizens the decision affects. Connecticut law currently allows for special taxing districts for specific purposes that can bring about significant community benefits for their members. Broadband development is not one of the allowed purposes.

In order to allow the creation of a special taxing district for the purpose of developing broadband, we support the phrase **“...to plan, lay out, acquire, construct, maintain, operate and regulate the use of a community broadband system...”** added to Connecticut General Statute 7-326.

Adding this language to allow special taxing districts for broadband development will:

- Create a vehicle to advance municipal broadband development and the implementation of public “gig” networks.



- Ensure the decision to participate in a public broadband development venture rests in the hands of the affected citizen.
- Allow a potential funding mechanism that protects essential services from potentially risky broadband development.

Communities that elect to form a special taxing district to develop broadband will:

- Better control public policy outcomes of broadband development.
- Be able to select “gig” network solutions and create environments of real broadband abundance.
- Be able to choose an “open” model allowing multiple service providers to compete across a common infrastructure.

To that end, we urge the legislature to pass HB 5636, AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL TAXING DISTRICTS, THE SALES TAX, THE APPRENTICESHIP TAX CREDIT, CERTAIN FEES AND THE TAX CREDIT REPORT

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Recanzone".

Paul Recanzone
President, OHivey