

March 18, 2016

The Honorable Senator Steve Cassano  
The Honorable Representative Ed Jutila  
Co Chairpersons  
Government Administration and Elections Committee  
Connecticut General Assembly  
Hartford, CT

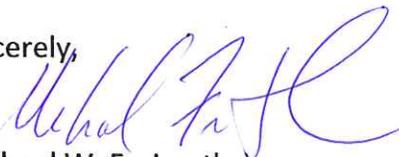
RE: Raised Bill 439

Dear Co-Chairpersons Cassano and Jutila:

The Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) is a small, 7-person quasi-state agency created to oversee the operations at the state's large entertainment venues including the Convention Center and the XL Civic Center. These buildings have hundreds of employees, all working for private management firms. Requiring their conversion to public employees as inferred by Raised Bill 439 would be burdensome, costly and disruptive. Many of these employees are represented by unions and collective bargaining agreements. Others are part time and/or second job opportunities.

We write with concern regarding Raised Bill 439 as it inserts the State Contracting Standards Board into a highly specialized procurement process tied to the entertainment and hospitality industry and incentives within it for performance. CRDA contracts come due on a periodic basis and are reviewed and evaluated by the CRDA Board that is skilled and experienced with these industries. Further, for short periods we employ specialized consultants, auditors and legal counsel to assist the CRDA Board. When construction is necessary, stadium, arena and large assembly hall architects and engineers are employed. In a time of strained budgets, we ask that an exception be made for CRDA from this legislation. We utilize all staff for procurement and do not have the luxury of any one 'procurement officer' and the agency was established to deal with public projects that are unique and do not fall within any particular state agency or operation.

Sincerely,



Michael W. Freimuth  
Executive Director