

March 2, 2016

Re: "Electronic Testimony Against Governor's S.B. No. 19 An Act Establishing the Transit Corridor Development Assistance Authority"

I would like to register my opposition to Governor's S.B. No. 19 "An Act Establishing the Transit Corridor Development Assistance Authority". Last year, I was one of many residents who spoke out against HB6851. Although some of the more ominous language has been removed, and some concessions made, S.B. 19 is hauntingly reminiscent of HB6851. This new bill overtly and covertly weakens local control over the direction of development around transit stations. Most communities have economic development commissions charged with seeking development initiatives that foster economic growth and create economic opportunities for residents while preserving the character of the community. This can only be done by individuals familiar with the municipality's strengths, opportunities and needs. S.B. 19 empowers the governor and his appointees to make the majority of board appointments. Local officials have only one vote on the board which is not sufficient to prevent a state driven agenda from being imposed at the local level. Although the language of eminent domain, contained in HB 6851, has disappeared, S.B. 19 ironically allows the use of tax dollars against a municipality, for purchase or lease of land for projects that may not be endorsed by the town.

Additionally, in these hard economic times with an ever increasing deficit, S.B. 19 creates another new agency. The state will be spending tax dollars on new government positions and adding an additional layer of government when at a local level, officials are already in place and fully capable of handling their own development. This bill and its associated spending is unnecessary. Please do not support this bill.

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