



## State of Connecticut

### SENATE

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**MEMBER**  
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### Testimony in Opposition to SB 19: An Act Establishing the Transit Corridor Development Assistance Authority

3/4/2016

By Senator Toni Boucher

Co-Chair Osten, Co-Chair Miller, Ranking Member Linares, Ranking Member Aman, and other distinguished members of the Planning and Development Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 19, An Act Establishing the Transit Corridor Development Assistance Authority.

This misguided and costly bill is a repeat of last year's effort to establish a Transit Corridor Authority. In 2015, it was called *An Act Establishing the Connecticut Transit Corridor Development Authority*. It didn't pass previously because it:

- Authorized the state to use eminent domain to snatch properties from a municipality, private organization, or a person.
- Did not give the local municipalities' officials a vote on what this new state Authority was doing in their city or town.
- Did not require a memorandum of understanding to begin work on a project.
- The voting members on the authority were all state political appointments.

The 2016 "Transit Corridor Development Authority Bill" brings revives several of these issues. It calls for the formation of a new quasi-public state agency to oversee development of projects within a half of a mile of train stations, bus stops, and any project undertaken in the Governor's transportation investment plan.

The concept remains a slippery slope towards usurping local zoning authority. It empowers the governor to make the majority of board appointments to a new costly bureaucracy that will be able to steamroll through municipal development plans and priorities.

Worse yet, while residents and businesses of Connecticut continue to tighten their belts in these hard economic times, the bill calls for spending our tax dollars on new and unnecessary government administrative positions.

Many towns already have economic development boards that know and understand local needs and already provide expertise in developing and overseeing projects. This previously killed bill that has now been resurrected includes the state oversight of areas within a half of a mile of the proposed transit zones. This expensive additional layer of state government is not called for, has not been asked for, and if passed, will only serve to increase budget deficits for years to come

I urge the committee to reject SB 19 and thank you for your time and attention.