



Testimony on Senate Bill 19

Submitted by Suzanne Bates, Policy Director

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Good morning. My name is Suzanne Bates. I am the policy director for the Yankee Institute for Public Policy, a Connecticut-based free market think tank.

I am here to speak in opposition to Senate Bill 19.

I recognize that some important changes have been made between last year's bill that would have created the Transit Corridor Development Authority (TCDA), and this year's bill that would create the Transit Corridor Development Assistance Authority (TCDAA).

While an improvement over the TCDA, there is still no clear purpose for the TCDAA when existing entities can already accomplish what the TCDAA is being created to do.

Creating another quasi-public agency, which by definition will be less transparent and accountable to state residents than a fully public agency, should not be done lightly. Municipalities across the state are not crying out for another quasi-public to help them with transit oriented development. Many municipalities, in concert with private developers, are already pursuing this option. The state Department of Transportation already has within its power the ability to help leverage federal assistance for these efforts.

What then would the TCDAA be created to do? This is an entity that can enter into contracts, borrow money, manage property, oversee construction and renovation projects, among other powers. This authority would have substantial control over many parcels of land across Connecticut, with very little accountability to local government leaders, and even less to the people of our state.

We do not need another quasi-public agency at this time. Existing public and private entities can perform the functions the TCDAA is supposedly being created to perform.

I ask you to please reject this bill.