



Branford, Connecticut

Economic Development Commission

March 10, 2016

TO: Senator Catherine Osten and Representative Philip Miller
Co Chairs, Planning and Development Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 2100

FROM: Perry J. Maresca, Branford Economic Development Commission

RE: S. B. 331 - AN ACT ESTABLISHING A HIGH-SPEED INTERNET SERVICE PILOT PROGRAM

My name is Perry Maresca and, as chair of Branford's Economic Development Commission, I am pleased to offer this testimony in support of S.B. 331, AN ACT ESTABLISHING A HIGH-SPEED INTERNET SERVICE PILOT PROGRAM.

Although Branford is a relatively small town, we have developed a business community that includes scores of new and expanding businesses across various industry sectors including biotech R&D, software development and data analysis, medical and healthcare, advanced manufacturing, video production, and more. American Polyfilm Inc., Axerion Therapeutics, Bausch & Ströbel, Blackwell Productions, Celldex Therapeutics, Core Informatics, Ivy Biomedical Systems, and Mt. Sinai Genetic Testing, are only a few examples of our town's corporate residents.

While all these businesses and hundreds more share Branford as their corporate home, they also share a growing need for faster and more affordable access to high speed data service. Passage of S.B. 331 would be a welcomed, first step in making that access possible for our business community.

If, as a town, region and a state, we are to remain competitive and succeed in attracting and retaining these and similar enterprises, it is critical that we develop a 21st century infrastructure. S.B. 331 will be an important tool for towns like Branford in building new ways to take advantage of our strategic East coast location and our talent pool of exceptional minds that today exhibit the Yankee ingenuity and drive that is so deeply ingrained in us. It is clear that today's economy requires that reliable and affordable high-speed service be available to meet the needs of both our residential and business communities.

Branford's EDC and other town officials have been involved in the CT Gig project from the beginning, helping to forge a way to establish a new fiber network to serve businesses and residents, and now S. B. 331 provides us with another avenue to pursue. Having made an investment in our own municipal infrastructure by installing a fiber network that connects most of our municipal buildings, we understand first-hand the return on that investment. We would like to have an opportunity for a similar return by investing to make fiber available to our business and residential community. We would like to add high-speed internet service to the list other utilities available in Branford, along with water, sewer, gas and electric. High-speed internet service is a 21st century utility that is just as critical for a vibrant economy that can compete and thrive throughout this century and around the globe.

I encourage the committee to support S. B. 331 and would be happy to provide any additional information it might like to have from Branford on this issue.

Perry J. Maresca

Perry J. Maresca, EDC Chair

cc: First Selectman Jamie Cosgrove