



**Testimony Of
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Finance Revenue and Bonding Committee
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Good day. My name is Peter Gioia. I am the economist for the Connecticut Business and Industry Association (CBIA). CBIA represents thousands of firms, which employ about 700,000 women and men in Connecticut. Our membership consists of firms of all sizes and types, the majority of which are small businesses employing fewer than 50 people.

CBIA is pleased to submit the following comments on SB 535, and HB 5591.

SB 535, AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE APPRENTICESHIP CONNECTICUT INITIATIVE

At this moment, Connecticut manufacturers are now looking to fill an estimated 13,000 career-sustaining jobs. Many of those jobs are at CBIA member companies, and there isn't a day that goes by where we aren't working to help fill those jobs and create an environment with the legislature and the administration to sustain and grow those jobs.

It is encouraging to see that both parties have also made it a priority to assess our workforce development programs, eliminate duplication, double down on what works, and focus on growth industries such as advanced manufacturing.

Connecticut has made great progress over the past several years in recognizing and moving towards its potential to return to a position of national and even global prominence with respect to manufacturing. There is also a clear connection between the quality and quantity of apprenticeship programs and our ability to fill the open manufacturing jobs.

SB 535 is one of several bills that would help solve the vexing challenge of closing the gap between employers and job seekers.

Several state, regional and local programs and partnerships have, and continue to develop with the mission of increasing Connecticut's manufacturing workforce. CBIA is partnering with many agencies and organizations involved with these programs and partnerships to help facilitate a "scaling-up" such that they can be even more productive and successful. As that work continues, we look forward to working with you to retool the jobs pipeline and fill these 13,000 career and family-sustaining jobs.

Even as this legislation ponders the creation of a new initiative, CBIA urges the committee to be mindful of the critical role that the state's technical high schools, community colleges, and the advanced manufacturing centers play in Connecticut's career pipeline—particularly the youth and underserved populations this bill speaks of. To that end, we ask that as the bill goes forward, manufacturers be included in the negotiations so that they can help shape and inform your work.

HB 5591, AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL REVENUE

This is a broad increase of taxes and fees. It does not help the competitive position of the state. We are particularly opposed to Section 10. Utility costs are already high for both citizens and businesses and this will drive those costs up. Other government entities around the country that charge fees for rights of way manage and maintain those rights of way. Their fees are an offset on management costs. This is a tax. We oppose the bill.

We hope the committee agrees with our positions. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.