



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

REPRESENTATIVE HOLLY CHEESEMAN
THIRTY-SEVENTH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

16 MITCHELL DRIVE
NIANTIC, CT 06357-2838

HOME: (860) 739-5429
CAPITOL: 1-800-842-1423
Holly.Cheeseman@housegop.ct.gov

RANKING MEMBER
GENERAL LAW COMMITTEE

MEMBER
FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE
ENERGY AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

February 13, 2019 * 11:15am * 2D

Testimony in Support of Proposed House Bill 5123, AN ACT PROHIBITING THE USE OF EMINENT DOMAIN FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES.

Dear Chairmen Cassano and McCarthy-Vahey, Ranking Members Champagne and Zawistowski, and distinguished members of the Planning and Development Committee:

Proposed House Bill 5123, AN ACT PROHIBITING THE USE OF EMINENT DOMAIN FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES is a long overdue piece of legislation. As a former resident of New London, I followed the Fort Trumbull saga closely. My now 92-year-old father was active in the group attempting to preserve the rights of the homeowners as the city of New London used eminent domain to seize their homes for commercial development. . Of course, as is well known, the efforts to protect their homes were in vain as the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of New London in *Kelo v. City of New London* in 2005. Condemnation of the decision was widespread, with groups including the AARP and NAACP adding their voices to the clamor against the ruling. Now, in 2019, that land stands vacant and undeveloped and Pfizer, the principal partner in the development, closed its Fort Trumbull facility in 2010, resulting in the loss of 1000 jobs.

Prior to the *Kelo* decision, only seven states specifically prohibited the use of eminent domain for economic development except to eliminate blight. Since the decision, forty-four states have amended their eminent domain laws. Shamefully, Connecticut is not among them. It is time to remedy that wrong with PHB 5123.

I respectfully urge you to support PHB 5123. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Holly Cheeseman
State Representative, 37th District
East Lyme, Niantic, Salem