



Testimony Regarding House Bill No. 5123, An Act Prohibiting the Use of Eminent Domain for Commercial Purposes.

Kevin A. Dillon, A.A.E.
Executive Director
Connecticut Airport Authority

Joint Committee on Planning and Development
February 13, 2019

Dear Senator Cassano, Representative McCarthy Vahey, Senator Champagne, Representative Zawistowski, and distinguished members of the Planning and Development Committee,

My name is Kevin Dillon, and I am the Executive Director of the Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA). **I am submitting this testimony regarding House Bill No. 5123, An Act Prohibiting the Use of Eminent Domain for Commercial Purposes.**

The CAA certainly understands the sensitivity of eminent domain proceedings, and it views the step as an absolute last resort. We have no desire to take such a step, and we would only consider such action when critically necessary. From time to time, it may be necessary to initiate eminent domain proceedings to ensure the safety of the flying public when it is not possible to negotiate with property owners surrounding airports. For example, this could occur when we must seek air space easements in the area surrounding one of our airports to comply with federal regulations. In reviewing this legislation, we do not believe that such safety-critical situations would qualify as “commercial purposes.”

However, there may be instances in the future when the CAA may need to seek eminent domain proceedings in other scenarios that others may construe as “commercial purposes.” The state’s commercial service airports are very limited resources. Connecticut has four commercial service airports, and there will not be any other, new commercial service airports in the near- or long-term. The CAA was created to maximize two of these commercial service airports, and, while we have no plans to use eminent domain proceedings for “commercial purposes,” we believe it is important to maintain that right to ensure that the state’s few commercial service airports are able to meet the needs of the growing traveling public. As such, the CAA respectfully requests that the CAA be exempted from this legislation if the committee decides to move forward with the bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments. Please feel free to contact me at (860) 292-2054 if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Kevin A. Dillon, A.A.E.
Executive Director
Connecticut Airport Authority