



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE PROPERTIES REVIEW BOARD
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EDWIN S. GREENBERG, CHAIRMAN
BRUCE JOSEPHY, VICE CHAIRMAN
JOHN P. VALENGAVICH, SECRETARY
JACK HALPERT, MEMBER
JEFFREY BERGER, MEMBER
WILLIAM CIANCI, MEMBER

DIMPLE DESAI, DIRECTOR
TEL: (860) 713-6400

TO: Honorable Members of the Government Administration and Elections

RE: **Raised H.B. No. 6444 – An Act Concerning Modernization of State Services**

My name is Jeffrey Berger, and I am a State Properties Review Board (hereinafter “Board”) member. I am accompanied by the Board Director, Dimple Desai, and his staff Tom Jerram. On behalf of Mr. Greenberg, the Board Chairman, and the Board members, I am here to express **OPPOSITION to Section 22** of the Raised H.B. No. 6444. The proposed language is to remove the submission of an annual report by the Commissioner of Administrative Services to the Board and the annual report from the Board to the Governor and the members of the joint standing committees of the General Assembly.

The Legislature established this bi-partisan independent Board in 1975 as a watchdog entity to ensure that the State’s real estate acquisitions and leases would be in the State’s best interest and free from “political patronage, cronyism, personal spoils systems, and friendship.” *See* Final Report of the Sub-Committee on Leasing, Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations, January 7, 1975.

Section 22 – lines 929 to 937: Removing the requirement of annual report from DAS to the Board and the Board to the Governor and the members of the joint standing committees.

Currently, the Board receives important information from DAS related to real estate acquisitions and the projected needs of the state. This information goes to the heart of why this Board was created in 1975. It is important that the Board is provided with this information to make sure that all the real estate acquisitions followed transparent process including fair market valuation based on the current market conditions in the area. Removing this requirement goes against the legislative intent when the legislation was enacted in 1975.

It is also important to provide an update on the Board's activities on an annual basis to the Governor and the General Assembly.

The Board, therefore, strongly **OPPOSES** to remove the annual reporting requirement as suggested in **Section 22** and requests the members to reject the proposed amendment.

Thank you for your time and opportunity to provide the testimony.