



Transportation Committee Wednesday, March 3, 2021

Oppose: Senate Bill 920: An Concerning Public Private Partnerships

Chair Lemar, Vice Chair Cassano members of the Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

My name is Stacey Zimmerman and I am here representing the Service Employees International Union Connecticut State Council. SEIU CT represents 65,000 members both in the public and private sectors; SEIU has over 2 million members in the United States and Canada.

SEIU opposes Senate Bill 920: An Concerning Public Private Partnerships as it is currently written. The lack of public oversight is a very disturbing trend in the public private partnership experiment.

Currently, P3s are restricted to the following areas: “(1) Early childcare, educational, health or housing facilities; (2) Transportation systems, including ports, transit-oriented development and related infrastructure; and (3) Any other kind of facility that may from time to time be designated as such by an act of the General Assembly.” State law restricts public-private partnerships to no more than 50 years, a remarkably long agreement, but not long enough for SB 920 which deletes that time limitation. SB 920 eliminates the requirement that public-private partnerships adhere to the provisions of section 4e-16 of Chapter 62 of the Connecticut State Statutes.

These changes would eliminate the post Rowland scandal safeguards such as the State Contracting Standards Board that were put into effect by the legislature, and effectively neutering the protections for the state.

The membership of this distinguished body has changed since the late 1990s and early 2000s when the state was coming to grips and just how much damage a corrupt administration could cause but the potential for such corruption is real. We must not throw away the safety net we built for the expedience of design build.

Bigger, faster, cheaper is a great slogan that is thrown around by contractors and consultants, but the reality is that the suspension of the rules could very well lead to unfinished, more expensive and corrupt. Do not lead us back to Corrupticut oppose SB 920.