

Questions for Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner Nominee

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February 2, 2023 | 2023-R-0058

Commissioner of Economic and Community Development ([CGS §§ 32-1b](#) and [32-1c](#))

The commissioner manages the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), which develops and implements the state's community and economic development policies and programs. The commissioner also oversees state efforts to promote arts and tourism and serves, ex officio, as the chair of the board of the quasi-public Connecticut Innovations, Inc. The economic development policies include providing different types of financing and tax incentives to businesses for constructing or expanding facilities, acquiring machinery and equipment, and cleaning up and redeveloping polluted properties. The community development policies include dispersing federal and state dollars to municipalities and nonprofit developers and administering tax credit and grant programs for rehabilitating certified historic structures.

Questions

1. What do you consider as DECD's most significant accomplishments during your tenure as deputy commissioner and chief investment officer? What do you see as the most important short- and long-term goals for DECD moving forward?
2. According to the Connecticut Business and Industry Association's (CBIA) [2022 Survey of Businesses](#), while the U.S. labor force has recovered and now exceeds pre-pandemic levels, Connecticut's labor force shrank between February 2020 and August 2022. What types of

workforce development initiatives should the legislature consider to ensure Connecticut businesses are able to find and retain employees?

3. What role does housing play in attracting and maintaining a strong workforce? Are there policies the legislature should consider to increase housing construction in the state?
4. How has the increase in remote work in response to the pandemic impacted Connecticut's employers, employees, and commercial districts? Do you expect these impacts will be long-term?
5. How would you rate Connecticut's current business climate? Has the state's economy fully recovered from the downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic?
6. How can DECD improve its state marketing strategy to better attract businesses, jobs, and visitors to the state?
7. Last session's budget implementer established the [JobsCT Tax Rebate Program](#) under which companies in specified industries may earn tax rebates for reaching certain job creation targets. Can you provide an update on this new program?
8. The 2022 budget implementer also required the DECD commissioner to (1) study, in consultation with the revenue services commissioner, extending the research and development tax credit to pass-through entities and (2) report on the study to the Commerce Committee by January 1, 2023. What is the status of this report? Can you discuss its recommendations, if any?
9. What is the current status of the Small Business Express (EXP) Program? Has the program been replaced by the [Small Business Boost Fund](#)? If so, can you explain how the boost fund differs from EXP?
10. Should the state play a larger role in promoting manufacturing careers to students? Are there existing manufacturing workforce development initiatives?

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