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# Town of Berlin

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Department of Economic Development

## Testimony in Support of SB 150 – An Act Establishing the Connecticut Infrastructure Authority

Senator Kasser, Representative Doucette, Senator Berthel, Representative Delnicki, Representative Gucker, Senator McCrory and other distinguished members of the Banking Committee:

I am the Economic Development Director for the Town of Berlin, and an advocate of creative re-use of properties as well as non-traditional solutions to move communities ahead. I am speaking today in favor of Senate Bill 150.

Our state, in a wonderful spot between Boston and New York City, is a hub of commerce, but as we know, there are challenges that we face care of our aging infrastructure. I believe that the creation of the Connecticut Infrastructure Authority can be a good thing, but we must make sure the role and oversight of it be very clear.

The private sector, of which I do most of my work with, is keenly aware of the challenges that transportation has on their success in both the short and long-term. If this Authority can use the best practices and ideas from both the public and private sectors, I feel it can provide a great benefit to our State.

I would ask that if this legislation is passed that part of the role would be to look closely at the large amount of property (buildings being the key area) that the State of Connecticut owns, particularly in our urban centers. As these properties are non-taxable, this puts a huge burden on the cities where they are located. I am not a finance guy, but if the Authority can look at the option of selling state assets and keep state agencies in place under leases, there may be upside for all of us. If properties are in private hands, these properties will go back on tax rolls and the property owner would then have the responsibility of the building maintenance, which is often a large portion of the cost of a building.

I appreciate the effort of this Committee and its work to improve our great state.

Thank you very much for your time today,

Chris Edge  
Economic Development Director  
Town of Berlin

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