



Testimony of Ashley Zane
Government Affairs Associate, CBIA
Before the Commerce Committee
Hartford, CT
February 11, 2021

Testifying in support of:

HB 5215: AN ACT ESTABLISHING A GRANT PROGRAM FOR CERTAIN RESEARCHERS ENGAGED IN STEM-RELATED RESEARCH IN THE STATE

My name is Ashley Zane and I am a Government Affairs Associate for CBIA, the Connecticut Business and Industry Association. CBIA is Connecticut's largest business organization, with thousands of member companies, small and large, representing a diverse range of industries from across the state. Ninety-five percent of CBIA member companies have 100 or fewer employees.

I am here in support of the intention of HB 5215, An Act Establishing a Grant Program for Certain Researchers Engaged in Stem-Related Research in the State. STEM research and development has been a critical part of our state's economy. The bioscience, biotech, advanced manufacturing, and other sectors have created high paying jobs and exponentially increased the state's tax roll.

Connecticut is home to revolutionary STEM-related companies including Pfizer with 3,000 plus employees in the state, Sanofi/Protein Sciences, Johnson and Johnson, and Amgen. Companies in the earlier stages of development include Arvinas, Tangen, and Sema4 which started with 15 or so employees in Branford and now employs 1,500 in Stamford. These innovative and important businesses have provided lifesaving technology and medical developments, and will continue to be leaders in their respective communities.

Providing \$100,000 per year for five years in a grant would signal to the STEM community that the state values and invests in these sectors. Connecticut is on its way to being a leader in STEM and should be offering incentives to businesses that will create a return on the state's investment. CBIA supports the intention behind this piece of legislation, but would like to see additional details regarding eligibility, reporting requirements, and other critical details of such a program.

We look forward to working with you and please feel free to reach out to us with any additional questions or concerns you may have.