

CITY OF NEW HAVEN
JUSTIN ELICKER, MAYOR



PREPARED TESTIMONY OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

RE: SB 873 AN ACT MITIGATING ADVERSE TAX CONSEQUENCES
RESULTING FROM EMPLOYEES WORKING REMOTELY DURING
COVID-19, AND CONCERNING THE REMOVAL OF LIENS ON THE
PROPERTY OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE BENEFICIARIES AND A THREE-
TIERED GRANTS IN LIEU OF TAXES PROGRAM

February 19, 2021

Honorable Senator Osten, Representative Walker and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Michael Piscitelli and I am the Economic Development Administrator for the City of New Haven. Thank you for your ongoing support of our economic development strategy and for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support for a tiered system of payments in lieu of taxes.

As you know from many others who are testifying on this matter, there is an urgent need to stabilize the City's municipal finances and provide critical public services. This is very important from a social justice and equity perspective. Approximately 27% of our population resides below the poverty line and approximately 5,700 residents are applying on a continuing basis for unemployment benefits during the pandemic. Lifting our residents out of poverty and providing access to jobs in a recovering economy is at the very heart of our mission.

As part of your deliberations, I encourage you to consider economic factors as they relate to strong local governance and municipal finances and I offer you some observations in that regard.

- New Haven has been recognized as the economic engine of Connecticut in part due to the knowledge and technology transfer of ideas coming out of Yale University, the national prominence of Yale-New Haven Health and the scientific brilliance at our bioscience, quantum and social impact technology companies.
- Economic growth has continued even during the pandemic. New Haven issued over 750 new housing permits last year, over 40 new business opened in the city and we continue a robust economic

infrastructure program with the Route 34 highway removal project and coastal resiliency projects at Long Wharf all of which help to stabilize and grow our tax base.

- Economic recovery is dependent however on the value of place, including strong neighborhoods, affordable housing for all residents, safety and quality education. The BioPath at Southern Connecticut State University is just one of the many examples whereby the City invests in the related career pipelines for New Haven public school students. This program, much like our small contractor program, cultural equity initiatives and neighborhood commercial investments, are at the very core of our ground game for future job growth and these efforts are at risk due to budget concerns.

In no uncertain terms, our growth is dependent on strong municipal finances, fair local property taxes and high-quality public services like education and infrastructure. With that in mind, New Haven is deeply committed to the Connecticut Comeback and look to advance a growth strategy well beyond the four corners of our city border.

Thank you for your consideration of the tiered PILOT approach and, in turn, the residents and business community in our city.

Respectfully submitted,

CITY OF NEW HAVEN



Michael Piscitelli, AICP
Economic Development Administrator
City of New Haven