

Act Number: SA10-4

2010

HB5495	Finance	254-256, 368	4
	House	1098-1101	4
	Senate	3539, 3550-3552	4
		Total Pages	12

**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

**FINANCE
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PART 1
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tmj/gbr FINANCE, REVENUE AND
BONDING COMMITTEE

March 15, 2010
11:00 A.M.

combined. So even though they had awarded us the \$250,000 in the prior year, they said they didn't want to make the same mistake twice. This was the very tail end of the year and they recommended that we approach the Legislature for this validating act, which is what this is.

We have commitments on all three of the programs from corporations in the state of Connecticut. We worked all last year to do that, to get that put together and within each one of the areas, we have vital programs that we are -- that this funding is providing a portion of the funding for each one of the programs that we're doing.

So we're here simply to ask you to pass this as a one time exemption. It still is -- it's my understanding that the total tax credit is a five million dollar budget item and that this would only take it to about 2.3 million so it is still substantially below the budget for the year.

REP. STAPLES: Thank you. Any questions? Thanks for your testimony. Representative Conroy. I don't see her here. She's right outside, maybe if someone could just let her know that her -- she's up.

Representative Conroy, we await you, we humbly await you. Well, maybe not humbly, but we await you anyway.

REP. THERESA CONROY: Well, good afternoon, Representative Staples and other distinguished members of the Finance Committee. For the record, my name's Theresa Conroy and I represent the 105th district, which includes Seymour, Beacon Falls and a part of Ansonia. I am here today to testify in favor of House Bill

HB5495

5495, AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE RIVER FALLS
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT WITHIN THE TOWN OF
SEYMOUR.

The town of Seymour has been working diligently on promoting economic growth. Currently, home owners are sharing the burden of taxes at 89 percent while businesses pay the other 11 percent. As a former mill town, Seymour has seen her share of companies closing. This bill will help establish an improvement district, allowing the property owners in that district to issue bonds to finance the cost of environmental remediation and related costs.

Because the bonds will be issued by a newly formed district, there will be no obligations by the town of Seymour. Rather, debt service on the bonds will be paid from incremental real estate taxes generated by the project within the district, pursuant to a tax sharing agreement.

The River Falls project will combine the old, empty Seymour Lumber Company, which is located on Route 67, with the now empty Housatonic Wire, which is adjacent on River Street, another state road. Dividing these two properties is the Little River, which has two beautiful waterfalls. The concept plan allowed for a public park in the center of the project, which would be a great addition to the town of Seymour.

Seymour's ideal for transit oriented development. The Waterbury Branch line of Metro North runs through the downtown area and has a stop there. The Naugatuck River, which has seen tremendous improvements over the years also runs through downtown directly across from this project. The Tigue Falls Fish Bypass is

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scheduled to begin this spring, which will allow fish to come up river to spawn.

The infrastructure is in place with Route 8 and Route 67 as major thoroughfares for the area. River Falls is an ideal location and a project that will be the catalyst for other areas to be redeveloped. Its central location will give other developers incentives to begin to develop their holdings.

I ask that serious consideration is given to House Bill 5495 as it passes out of committee. And just as an aside, this use will be a mixed use including housing in there, retail business. I've seen the concept plan. I was truly impressed when I saw that. I believe that this project being centrally located truly will be the impetus for other projects along the Route 8 connects down the Naugatuck Valley.

REP. STAPLES: Thank you very much. I think, as I've mentioned to you, we've done this for a few projects. And I think it's -- it really helps, especially where there's remediation needs, to get a creative way of financing to help the town do what it needs to do. So I hope that we can get this bill passed for you and for your town and that it will give you a chance to do something that will really benefit the community at large. So thank you for coming and telling us about the project.

REP. THERESA CONROY: Thank you.

REP. STAPLES: Any questions or comments from members of the committee? Thank you very much.

Kathryn Fabiani followed by Dave Grogan.

KATHRYN FABIANI: Good afternoon, Chairman Staples

HB5481

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**Testimony of Rep. Theresa Conroy
State Representative, 105th District**
on
**HB 5495 An Act Establishing the River Falls Improvement District
within the Town of Seymour**

Good morning Senator Daily, Representative Staples and other distinguished members of the Finance Committee. For the record, my name is Theresa Conroy and I represent the 105th Assembly District, which includes the towns of Seymour, Beacon Falls and part of Ansonia. I am here to testify in favor of HB 5495 An Act Establishing the River Falls Improvement District within the Town of Seymour.

The town of Seymour is working diligently on promoting economic growth. Currently, homeowners are sharing the burden of taxes at 89%, while businesses pay the other 11%. As a former mill town, Seymour has seen her share of companies closing. This bill will help establish an improvement district, allowing the property owners in that district to issue bonds to finance the costs of environmental remediation and related costs. Because the bonds will be issued by the newly formed district, there will be no obligations by the Town of Seymour. Rather, debt service on the bonds would be paid from incremental real estate taxes generated by the project within the District pursuant to a tax sharing agreement.

The River Falls project will combine the old empty Seymour Lumber Company located on Route 67 with the now empty Housatonic Wire, which is adjacent on River Street, another state road. Dividing the two properties is the Little River with two beautiful waterfalls. The concept plan would allow for a public park in the center of the project, which would be a great addition to the town.

Seymour is ideal for transit oriented development. The Waterbury Branch line of Metro North runs through the downtown area and has a stop there. The Naugatuck River, which has seen tremendous improvements, also runs through downtown, directly across from this project. The Tingue Falls Fish Bypass is scheduled to begin this spring, which will allow fish to come upriver to spawn. The infrastructure is in place with Route 8 and Route 67 as major thoroughfares for the area.

River Falls is an ideal project that will be the catalyst for other areas to be developed. Its central location will give other developers incentives to develop their holdings. I ask that serious consideration is given to HB 5494 to pass it out of committee.

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HOUSE**

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Those voting Nay 0

Those absent and not voting 7

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

The bill as amended is passed.

Would the Clerk please call Calendar 319 -- 319.

THE CLERK:

On page 23, Calendar 319, House Bill Number 5495,
AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE RIVER FALLS IMPROVEMENT
DISTRICT WITHIN THE TOWN OF SEYMOUR, favorable report
of the Committee on Finance, Revenue and Bonding.

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

From the Elm City, Representative Staples of the
97th, you have the floor, sir.

REP. STAPLES (97th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I move acceptance of the Joint
Committee's favorable report and passage the bill.

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

The question before the Chamber is acceptance of
the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of
the bill.

Please proceed, Representative Staples.

REP. STAPLES (97th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the bill before us permits the Town of Seymour to establish a special taxing district for the purpose of improving the community in a manner which we have already allowed through special legislation for about five other communities.

This is not general legislation but is special legislation because it permits the town to establish a district that will allow them to finance, through the issuance of bonds, remediation of brownfields and assist in the development of parcels that could not otherwise be prepared for development without the use of this special mechanism.

I recommend this -- this bill to my colleagues on the grounds that it has been very carefully crafted to provide protections to the property owners, to subsequent buyers and to the community of Seymour, and we hope will provide an opportunity for that community to do the development of the brownfields contaminated lands that it might not otherwise be able to do without the assistance of this proposal.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I urge support for the bill.

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Question before the Chamber is adoption of the

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bill.

Representative Candelora, of the 86th, you have the floor, sir.

REP. CANDELORA (86th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I, too, also rise in support of the bill.

Thank you.

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Thank you.

And from the valley, Representative Conroy, you have the floor, madam.

REP. CONROY (105th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I also stand in favor of this bill. It's an important piece of legislation that the Town of Seymour is depending on right now. We are looking to do a lot of development and economic development in the community. And I urge all of my fellow Legislators to stand with me and support this bill.

Thank you.

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Here's one for the valley, madam.

Further on this bill? Further on this bill?

If not, staff and guests come to the well. House

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members take your seats. The machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by roll
call. Members to the chamber. The House is voting by
roll call. Members to the chamber.

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members
voted? Please check the board to make sure your vote
is properly cast.

If all the members have voted, the machine will
be locked. Would the Clerk please take and announce
the tally. Will the Clerk please announce the tally?

THE CLERK:

House Bill 5495.	
Total Number voting	145
Necessary for adoption	73
Those voting Yea	145
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	6

SPEAKER ALTOBELLO:

The bill passes.

Would the Clerk please call Calendar 293.

THE CLERK:

On page 20, Calendar 293, House Bill Number 5392,

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THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, moving to calendar page 10,
Calendar 449, House Bill Number 5495. Mr. President,
I move to place that item on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President, moving
to calendar page 11, Calendar 451, Substitute for
House Bill Number 5535. Mr. President, move to place
this item on the consent calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, moving to calendar page 12,
Calendar 473, Substitute for House Bill Number 5059.
Mr. President, move to place this item on the consent
calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered.

Bill 121; calendar page 7, Calendar 377, Substitute for House Bill 5291; Calendar page 8, Calendar 398, Substitute for Senate Bill 231; calendar page 9, Calendar 442, Substitute for House Bill 5141; calendar page 10, Calendar 449, House Bill 5495; calendar page 11, Calendar 451, Substitute for House Bill 5535; Calendar 465, Substitute for House Bill 44 -- 5448; calendar page 12, Calendar 466, Substitute for House Bill 5289; Calendar 473, Substitute for House Bill 5059; Calendar 476, Substitute for House Bill 5117; calendar page 13. Calendar 478, House Bill 5290; Calendar 481, Substitute for House Bill 5119; Calendar 482, Substitute for House Bill 5120; calendar page 15, Calendar 492, Substitute for House Bill 5446; Calendar 494, House Bill 5315; Calendar 504, Substitute for House Bill 5306; calendar page 20, Calendar 532, Substitute for House Bill 5033; calendar page 21, Calendar 534, Substitute for House Bill 5543; Calendar 539, Substitute for House Bill 5350; calendar page 25, Calendar 561, Substitute for House Bill 5419; calendar page 36, Calendar 374, Substitute for House Bill 5225; calendar page 37, Calendar 415, House Bill 5131; calendar page 38, Calendar 454, Substitute for House Bill 5526.

Mr. President, that completes the items placed on Consent Calendar Number 2.

THE CHAIR:

Please call for a roll call vote. The machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

The Senate is now voting by roll on the consent calendar. Will all Senators please return to the chamber. Senate is voting by roll on the consent calendar. Will all Senators please return to the chamber.

THE CHAIR:

Have all Senators voted? If all Senators have voted, please check your vote. The machine will be locked. The Clerk will call the tally.

THE CLERK:

Motion is adoption of Consent Calendar Number 2.

Total number voting

35

Necessary for Adoption 18

Those voting Yea 35

Those voting Nay 0

Those absent and not voting 1

THE CHAIR:

Consent calendar Number 2 passes.

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Yes, thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, I would move that any items on the consent calendar requires additional action by the House of Representatives be immediately transmitted to that chamber.

THE CHAIR:

Without objection, so ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

And also any other items acted upon today, not on the consent calendar requiring action by the House of Representatives. Also would move that those items be immediately transmitted.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, sir, so ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, I would yield to any members seeking recognition for announcements or points of personal privilege.

THE CHAIR:

At this time, I will entertain any points of