

An Open Letter to our State's Policymakers: Build a COMPETITIVE Connecticut

Our national and state economies have entered what is expected to be one of the longest and deepest downturns in a generation. Noted Connecticut economists are already predicting our state will lose up to 80,000 jobs. State budget deficits are now expected to exceed \$6 billion over the next two fiscal years. Perhaps more ominously, structural changes in industries which have historically been important to Connecticut, such as finance, will pose even greater challenges for our state's economic recovery.

While this economic downturn may make us long for the good economic times of the last decade-plus, the reality is that our state has been in a prolonged period of economic stagnation for nearly a generation. In 2005, the Connecticut Economic Resource Center published a widely hailed benchmark study of our state's economy. That report found that in Connecticut there had been "no net job growth for the past 15 years." Follow-up studies by the organization have found that our state's job picture has seen no improvement.

For too long, policy debates about our state's business climate have been viewed as a zero-sum game, in which pro-business reforms are rejected because they are perceived to come at the expense of some interest group. Such a simplistic view ignores the fact that pro-business measures do more than merely help a business turn a profit; they create jobs and expand employment, generate tax revenues, and help fund important government programs and non-profit organizations.

In Washington, DC, many political leaders are calling for a new "post-partisanship" period for our nation, Connecticut policymakers should follow their lead and adopt a new attitude that reverses the perception that Connecticut is an unfriendly place to do business and instead encourages economic growth for our state. Businesses, after all, can choose where to put jobs and invest capital. We want them to come here and to stay here.

To that end, we urge Connecticut's policymakers, when formulating and executing public policy, always to consider the impact on our state's economy. Will a certain proposal help to create jobs? Will a proposal make our state more or less competitive with other states and countries? Are we as a state doing everything we can to encourage investment? Do the rhetoric and actions of our political leaders welcome businesses and jobs to our state or do they create the impression that Connecticut is hostile to the business community?

How these questions are answered will determine whether our great state will become the global economic leader it once was and should be again.

Sincerely,

ACTION COACH	Connecticut Technology Council	HealthNet of the Northeast	Orange Research Inc.
Air Handling Systems	Cougar Electronics Corp.	Hebert Jewelers	Pathway to Wellness LLC
ALCOA Howmet	CT Association for United Spanish Action, Inc (CAUSA)	Hispanic Alliance of New London County	Penmar Industries, Inc.
Alliance for Living	CT Engravers and H. Mangels Confectioner	Homes for the Brave	Prestige Tool Mfg, LLC
Alloy Engineering	CT Engravers and H. Mangels Confectioner	Homewood Suites by Hilton - Stratford	Prospect Machine Products Inc.
Anray Printing & Graphic Solutions	CT NAACP	Human Services Council, Norwalk	Pue, Chick, Leibowitz & Blezard, LLC
Aquarion Co	Danbury Chamber of Commerce	Jerry Effren, President, Greyrock Development Co.	Quinnipiac Chamber of Commerce
Arte, Inc.	Jim Della Volpe, Mayor Town of Ansonia	Kuchma Corporation	Roger Salls Photography
AT&T Connecticut	Design Professionals, Inc.	Lighting Technology	SARAH
Ray Baldwin, First Selectman, Town of Trumbull	Michael Devine, President Devine Brothers, Inc.	Lyons Financial Associates	SBC Restaurants & Breweries
Bead Industries Inc.	East Hartford Chamber of Commerce	Madison Chamber of Commerce	Schwerdtle Stamp Co
Beard Concrete Inc.	Eugene O'Neill Theater Center	Madonna Place	Sikorsky Aircraft
Beardsley, Brown, & Bassett	David Evans	Main Enterprises Inc.	Smart Home Theaters
Beckett & Associates Veterinary Services LLC	Fitness & Yoga for Women	Manchester Chamber of Commerce	Smith Automatic Sprinkler
Bigelow Tea	Fletcher-Thompson Inc.	Market Realty, LLC	Sound View Community Media
Bigman Consulting Services, LLC	Mary Jane Foster	Marvin Display	Southeastern Connecticut Enterprise Region (SECTER)
Blum Shapiro, Inc.	Fox Ridge Services Inc.	Merit Insurance	Spanish American Merchants Association
Branford Chamber of Commerce	Ganim Group, Inc.	Metro Hartford Alliance	Spirit of Broadway Theater, Best Production Company
Bridgeport Regional Business Council	Anthony Gargano, State Farm Agent	Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce	Stamford Chamber of Commerce
Business & Industry Foundation of Southeastern Connecticut	Glastonbury Chamber of Commerce	Milford Chamber of Commerce	SteelTech Building Products
Business Transfer Alliance	Goatthroat Pumps	My Other Office, LLC	TBICO, Danbury
BusinessWise, LLC	Greater Bridgeport Transit Authority	Natchaug Hospital	The Arc of New London County
Tom Buzi, First Selectman, Town of Monroe	Greater Meriden Chamber of Commerce	National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB)	The Milford Bank
Career Resources	Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce	New England School of Montessori	The Workplace
Central Connecticut Chambers of Commerce	Greater New England Minority Supplier Development Council	New Haven Manufacturing Association	Tri Town Precision Plastics
Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut	Greater New Haven Association of Realtors	New London Main Street	Tunxis Community College
Children in Placement	Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce	North Branford Chamber of Commerce	Ulbrich Stainless Steels and Special Metals Inc.
Children's Connection	Greater Valley Chamber of Commerce	Northeast Connecticut Economic Alliance	United Aluminum
Children's Connection Norwalk	Greater Waterbury YMCA	Northwest Connecticut Arts Council	Urban League of Greater Hartford
Clinton Chamber of Commerce	Guilford Chamber of Commerce	Northwest Connecticut's Chamber of Commerce	Wassmer Ventures
Coaching for Life	Hacienda Storage Co.	Norwalk Chamber of Commerce	Waterbury Opportunities Industrialization Center, Inc.
Cody & Gonillo	Harbor Lites Hair Design	Nutmeg TV	Waterbury Regional Chamber of Commerce
Computer Payroll Services Inc.			Webster Bank
Concepts for Adaptive Learning Connecticutare			Windham Regional Chamber of Commerce
Connecticut Container/Unicorr Packaging Group			Windham Regional Community Council
Connecticut Science Center			Women's Center of Southeastern Connecticut



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