



CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF LAND SURVEYORS
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Senator Len Fasano
Senate Republican Leader,
Representative Themis Klarides
House Republican Leader

SUBJECT: S.B. No. 946 AN ACT CONCERNING REVENUE ITEMS TO IMPLEMENT THE GOVCERNOR'S BUDGET.

Senator Fasano, Representative Klarides, members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and members of the State Senate and the State House of Representatives;

Thank you for this opportunity and for taking the time to consider the following.

My name is Robert Dahn, I am a professional surveyor and a partner in a land surveying and civil engineering firm in Manchester, CT. I am a Past President of the Connecticut Association of Land Surveyors (CALS) and continue to serve as the chair of the CALS Legislative Committee. I am also a Past President of the National Society of Professional Surveyors (NSPS).

On behalf of the CALS, I am writing to express opposition to the provisions of S.B. 946 that remove the sales tax exemption for design professionals in the State of Connecticut. Design professionals in Connecticut include Architects, Engineers and Land Surveyors. We provide a variety of valuable and necessary services to the citizens of the State.

Historically design professionals have been exempt from sales tax. Under similar circumstances, in 1989, the legislature removed the exemption from land surveying services. At the time the tax was found to be ineffective and difficult to administer. In 1992 the legislature restored the exemption largely for these reasons.

A significant majority of the CALS membership work in the private sector. Among this group most are employed by small firms. We are just beginning a slow yet steady recovery from a severe economic downturn, a sales tax will have a profound affect on all survey businesses in Connecticut, especially the small firms. In many small firms the licensed professional and the managing partner are the same person. Time spent administering the tax will ultimately be included in the cost of the survey. Even as the economy has improved, bottom line cost has been a greater factor in whether a project moves forward, than ever before. For small residential and low income projects this appears to be particularly true.

Most design projects include an extensive permitting and regulatory process. Typically this process is a collaborative

effort between the design professionals and attorneys. Real estate conveyances and commercial land title closings require the services of both surveyors and attorneys. Under S.B. 946, attorneys would be exempt from sales tax and design professionals would be taxed while working on the same process. Adding yet another financial burden to the tenuous housing recovery.

CALS recognizes the importance of fiscal responsibility. A balanced budget is as important to the government as it is to a design professional's business. We do not envy your task. In the end, whether you choose to raise taxes, cut spending or a combination of the two, we believe it should be assessed in a proportional and equitable fashion. I would suggest, that the legislature, distribute whatever revenue increases or service cuts you may propose to balance the budget, proportionally throughout the entire existing tax code and budget structure. Share the burden fairly across the board.

I again thank the members of the State House and Senate for their time and attention to this important topic and for your dedication and service to the people of the State of Connecticut.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Dahn

Robert Dahn

Affiliated with the National Society of Professional Surveyors