



House of Representatives

File No. 957

General Assembly

January Session, 2025

(Reprint of File No. 627)

Substitute House Bill No. 7153
As Amended by House Amendment
Schedule "A"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner
May 27, 2025

**AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PORT
EASTSIDE INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT IN THE
TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD AND THE PARK CITY LANDING
INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT IN THE CITY OF
BRIDGEPORT.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General
Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) As used in this section and
2 section 2 of this act:

3 (1) "District" means the Port Eastside Infrastructure Improvement
4 District, which may be established as a body politic and corporate
5 pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, situated in the town of East
6 Hartford, county of Hartford and state of Connecticut and bounded and
7 described as follows: Beginning at the intersection of the northerly street
8 line of Hartland Street and the easterly street line of East River Drive;
9 thence running northerly along the easterly street line of East River
10 Drive a distance of 883 feet, more or less; thence running easterly and
11 northerly along the southerly and westerly lines of land now or formerly

12 of Merchant Founders Lodging, LLC a distance of 792 feet, more or less,
13 to the southerly street line of Pitkin Street; thence running easterly along
14 said southerly street line of Pitkin Street a distance of 616 feet, more or
15 less; thence running southerly along the westerly line of land now or
16 formerly of Milton East Hartford Investments, LLC and land now or
17 formerly of Infinity IV, LLC, partly by each, a distance of 715 feet, more
18 or less, to the northerly street line of Hartland Street; thence running
19 westerly along said northerly street line of Hartland Street a distance of
20 101 feet, more or less; thence running southerly crossing Hartland Street
21 a distance of 60 feet to the southerly street line of Hartland Street; thence
22 running southeasterly along the westerly line of land now or formerly
23 of the Connecticut Natural Gas Corporation a distance of 818 feet, more
24 or less; thence running westerly and northwesterly along the southerly
25 and easterly lines of land now or formerly of the Town of East Hartford
26 a distance of 1,143 feet, more or less, to the southerly street line of
27 Hartland Street; thence running northwesterly crossing Hartland Street
28 a distance of 95 feet, more or less, to the point of beginning;

29 (2) "District improvements" means improvements for any or all of the
30 following public purposes: To (A) light streets, (B) plant and care for
31 shade and ornamental trees, (C) plan, lay out, acquire, construct,
32 maintain and finance roads, sidewalks, crosswalks, drains, sewers,
33 water lines, parking facilities, open space, waterside improvements,
34 environmental remediation and other infrastructure improvements,
35 and (D) acquire, construct, maintain and regulate the use of recreational
36 facilities. "District improvements" includes any off-site locations or
37 improvements made outside the district but related to or made
38 necessary by the establishment of the district, including, but not limited
39 to, any transit enhancements, bridges, roadways, traffic signalization,
40 easements, environmental protection devices or structures, storm or
41 sanitary sewer lines, water lines, utility lines, and waterfront
42 improvements along the Connecticut River;

43 (3) "Approval for district improvements" means the issuance of any
44 permit or approval or the performance of any administrative action
45 required for any work performed in connection with the district

46 improvements;

47 (4) "Benefit assessment" means an assessment by the district for the
48 proportion of any cost, or estimated cost, and any associated finance cost
49 whenever the district constructs, improves, extends, equips,
50 rehabilitates, repairs, acquires or provides a grant for any district
51 improvements or finances the cost of such improvements;

52 (5) "Commissioner" means the commissioner or commissioners of a
53 state agency or state agencies that have jurisdiction over an approval for
54 district improvements;

55 (6) "Public entity" means the state and any agency thereof;

56 (7) "Voter" means (A) any person who is an elector of the district, (B)
57 any citizen of the United States eighteen years of age or older who,
58 jointly or severally, is liable to the district for taxes assessed against such
59 citizen on an assessment of not less than one thousand dollars on the
60 last-completed grand list of such district, as the case may be, or who
61 would be so liable if not entitled to an exemption under subdivision (17),
62 (19), (22), (23) or (26) of section 12-81 of the general statutes, or (C) any
63 holder of record of an interest in real property within the district;

64 (8) "Bonds" means bonds, notes or other obligations authorized by
65 this section, and refunding bonds, notes or other obligations to refinance
66 the same; and

67 (9) "Interlocal agreement" means an agreement, entered into in
68 accordance with section 7-339c of the general statutes, between the
69 district and the town of East Hartford relating to the sharing of
70 incremental tax revenues collected on real property within the district.

71 (b) (1) The mayor of the town of East Hartford shall, upon the petition
72 of fifteen or more persons eligible to vote in said town specifying the
73 district for any or all of the purposes set forth in this section, call a
74 meeting of the voters to act upon such petition. Not later than thirty
75 days after receipt of such petition, the mayor shall designate the time

76 and place for such meeting. Not less than fourteen days before such
77 meeting, the mayor shall publish notice of such meeting in two
78 successive issues of a newspaper published or having general
79 circulation in the town of East Hartford. Not later than twenty-four
80 hours before such meeting, (A) two hundred or more voters or ten per
81 cent of the total number of voters of such proposed district, whichever
82 is less, may petition the mayor, in writing, for a referendum of the voters
83 of such proposed district, or (B) the mayor may, in the mayor's
84 discretion, order a referendum of the voters of such proposed district on
85 the sole question of whether the proposed district should be established.
86 Any such referendum shall be held not less than seven and not more
87 than fourteen days after the receipt of such petition or the date of such
88 order, on a date to be set by the mayor for a vote by paper ballots or by
89 a "yes" or "no" vote on the voting machines, during the hours between
90 twelve o'clock noon and eight o'clock p.m. Notwithstanding the
91 provisions of any special act, the town may provide for an earlier hour
92 for opening the polls by vote of its town council, provided such opening
93 of the polls is not earlier than six o'clock a.m. If voters representing at
94 least two-thirds of the assessments of holders of record within the
95 proposed district cast votes in favor of establishing the proposed district
96 in such referendum, the mayor shall reconvene such meeting not later
97 than seven days after such referendum. Upon approval of the petition
98 for the proposed district by voters representing at least two-thirds of the
99 assessments of holders of record within the proposed district present at
100 such meeting, or, if a referendum is held, upon the reconvening of such
101 meeting after such referendum, the voters may establish the district. The
102 district shall, upon the filing of the first report filed as provided in
103 subsection (c) of section 7-325 of the general statutes, be a body
104 corporate and politic and have the powers provided in sections 7-324 to
105 7-329, inclusive, of the general statutes, not inconsistent with the general
106 statutes, this section and section 2 of this act, concerning the purposes
107 for which the district was established and that are necessary for the
108 accomplishment of such purposes, including the power to lay and
109 collect taxes. The clerk of the district shall cause the name of the district
110 and a description of the district's territorial limits to be recorded in, and

111 a caveat be placed upon, the land records of the town of East Hartford.
112 Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to limit the power of the
113 town of East Hartford to lay and collect taxes upon property in the
114 district.

115 (2) At the meeting called for the purpose of establishing the district
116 as provided in subdivision (1) of this subsection, the voters may
117 establish the district for the purpose of making any or all of the district
118 improvements. The district may contract with a town, city, borough or
119 other district for the carrying out of any of the purposes specified in this
120 subsection or for the purchase or sale of any of the improvements for
121 which the district was established.

122 (3) (A) At the meeting called for the purpose of establishing the
123 district as provided in subdivision (1) of this subsection, the voters shall
124 fix the date of the annual meeting of the voters for the election of district
125 officers and the transaction of such other business as may properly come
126 before such annual meeting. At such meeting of the district, the voters
127 shall elect a president, vice-president, five directors, a clerk and a
128 treasurer to serve until the first annual meeting for the election of
129 officers and thereafter such officers shall be elected annually. Upon the
130 district's organization and at all times thereafter, one director shall be
131 appointed by, and serve at the pleasure of, the mayor of the town of East
132 Hartford.

133 (B) At the first annual meeting of the district, the directors not
134 appointed by the mayor shall be elected to serve for one, two, three or
135 four years, respectively, and thereafter such directors shall be elected to
136 serve for four-year terms as each term ends. Not fewer than three
137 members of the board of directors shall be residents of this state.

138 (C) Special meetings of the district may be called on the application
139 of ten per cent of the total number of voters of such district or twenty of
140 the voters of such district, whichever is less, or by the president or any
141 three directors upon giving notice as provided in this section. Any
142 special meeting called on the application of the voters shall be held not

143 later than twenty-one days after receiving such application.

144 (D) Notice of the holding of the annual meeting and all special
145 meetings shall (i) be given by publication of a notice of such meetings in
146 a newspaper having a general circulation in the town of East Hartford
147 not less than ten days before the day of any such meeting, (ii) be signed
148 by the president or any three directors, and (iii) designate the time and
149 place of such meeting and the business to be transacted at such meeting.

150 (E) Two hundred or more persons or ten per cent of the total number
151 of voters of such district, whichever is less, may submit a written
152 petition to the clerk of such district not less than twenty-four hours prior
153 to any such meeting, requesting that any item or items on the call of such
154 meeting be submitted to the voters of the district not less than seven nor
155 more than fourteen days thereafter, on a day to be set by the district
156 meeting or, if the district meeting does not set a date, by the board of
157 directors, for a vote by paper ballots or by a "yes" or "no" vote on the
158 voting machines, during the hours between twelve o'clock noon and
159 eight o'clock p.m., except that the district may, by vote of its board of
160 directors, provide for an earlier hour for opening the polls but not earlier
161 than six o'clock a.m. The paper ballots or voting machine ballot labels,
162 as the case may be, shall be provided by the clerk. When such a petition
163 has been filed with the clerk, the president, after completion of other
164 business and after discussion, shall adjourn such meeting and order
165 such vote on such item or items in accordance with the petition, and any
166 item so voted may be rescinded in the same manner. The clerk shall
167 phrase such item or items in a form suitable for printing on such paper
168 ballots or ballot labels.

169 (F) At any annual or special meeting, the voters may, by a majority
170 vote of those present, discontinue any purposes for which the district is
171 established or undertake any additional purpose or purposes
172 enumerated in subdivision (2) of this subsection.

173 (4) (A) A quorum for the transaction of business at the meeting called
174 for the purpose of establishing the district, as provided in subdivision

175 (1) of this subsection, shall be either fifteen voters of such district or a
176 majority of the holders of record of interests in real property within such
177 district, as long as the assessments of such holders of record constitute
178 more than one-half of the total of assessments for all interests in real
179 property within such district. If fifteen voters or a majority of the holders
180 of record of interests in real property within such district are not present
181 at such meeting or the assessments of such holders of record constitute
182 less than one-half of the total of assessments for all interests in real
183 property within such district, the mayor may adjourn such meeting
184 until at least fifteen voters or a majority of the holders of record of
185 interests in real property within such district are present and the
186 assessments of such holders of record constitute more than one-half of
187 the total of assessments for all interests in real property within such
188 district.

189 (B) For the transaction of business at any other meeting of the district,
190 a quorum shall be either fifteen voters of the district or a majority of the
191 holders of record of interests in real property within such district,
192 provided the assessments for such holders of record constitute more
193 than one-half of the total of assessments for all interests in real property
194 within such district. If fifteen voters or a majority of the holders of record
195 of interests in real property within such district are not present at such
196 meeting or the assessments of such holders of record constitute less than
197 one-half of the total assessments for all interests in real property within
198 such district, the president of the district or, in such president's absence,
199 the vice-president may adjourn such meeting until at least fifteen voters
200 or a majority of the holders of record of interests in real property within
201 such district are present and the assessments of such holders of record
202 constitute more than one-half of the total of assessments for all interests
203 in real property within such district. Any meeting of the district where
204 a quorum is present may be adjourned by a vote of a majority of the
205 voters voting on the question.

206 (5) In any case in which an action for a vote by the voters of the district
207 is to be initiated by the petition of such voters, in addition to such other
208 requirements as the general statutes or any special act may impose, such

209 petition shall be on a form prescribed or approved by the clerk of such
210 district, and each page of such petition shall contain a statement, signed
211 under penalties of false statement, by the person who circulated the
212 same, setting forth such person's name and address, and stating that (A)
213 each voter whose name appears on such page signed the same in person
214 in the presence of the person who circulated the petition, (B) such person
215 either knows each such voter or that the voter satisfactorily identified
216 such voter to such person, and (C) each signature on such page was
217 obtained not earlier than six months before the filing of such petition.
218 Any page of a petition that does not contain such a statement by the
219 person who circulated such petition shall be invalid. Any person who
220 makes a false statement in the statement required by this subdivision
221 shall be subject to the penalty for false statements pursuant to section
222 53a-157b of the general statutes. Any petition circulated pursuant to this
223 subdivision by a person who is not a voter of the district shall be invalid.

224 (c) If (1) the officers of the district vote to terminate the district's
225 corporate existence, or (2) the district clerk receives a petition signed by
226 ten per cent of the total voters of such district or twenty of the voters of
227 such district, whichever is less, applying for a special meeting to vote on
228 the termination of the district, the clerk shall call a special meeting of the
229 voters of such district. The notice of such meeting shall be signed by the
230 officers of the district and be advertised as required by section 7-325 of
231 the general statutes. Not later than twenty-four hours before any such
232 meeting, two hundred or more voters or ten per cent of the total number
233 of voters, whichever is less, may petition the clerk of the district, in
234 writing, that a referendum on the question of whether the district should
235 be terminated be held in the manner provided in section 7-327 of the
236 general statutes. If, at such meeting, a two-thirds majority of the voters
237 present vote to terminate the corporate existence of the district, or, if a
238 referendum is held, two-thirds of the voters casting votes in such
239 referendum vote to terminate the corporate existence of the district, the
240 officers shall terminate the affairs of such district. The district shall pay
241 all outstanding indebtedness of the district and transfer the balance of
242 the assets of such district to the town in which the district is located

243 upon the approval of the town council of the town of East Hartford. The
244 district shall not be terminated under this section until all of its
245 outstanding indebtedness is paid unless the town council of the town of
246 East Hartford agrees, in writing, to assume such indebtedness. On
247 completion of the duties of the officers of such district, the clerk shall
248 cause a certificate of the vote of such meeting to be recorded in the land
249 records of the town of East Hartford and the clerk shall notify the
250 Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management of such district's
251 termination.

252 (d) (1) At any meeting of the district, any tenant in common of any
253 interest in real property shall have a vote equal to the fraction of such
254 tenant in common's ownership of such interest. Any joint tenant of any
255 interest in real property shall vote as if each such tenant owned an equal
256 fractional share of such real property. A corporation shall have its vote
257 cast by the chief executive officer of such corporation, or such officer's
258 designee. An entity eligible to vote in the district that is not a corporation
259 shall have its vote cast by a person authorized by such entity to cast its
260 vote. No owner shall have more than one vote.

261 (2) No holder of record of an interest in real property shall be
262 precluded from participating in any district meeting or referendum
263 because of the form of entity that holds such interest, whether such
264 holder of record is (A) a corporation, partnership, unincorporated
265 association, trustee, fiduciary, guardian, conservator or other form of
266 entity, or any combination thereof, or (B) an individual who holds
267 interests jointly or in common with another individual or individuals,
268 or with any one or more of the entities listed in subparagraph (A) of this
269 subdivision.

270 (e) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes, including
271 sections 7-324 to 7-329, inclusive, of the general statutes, the district shall
272 have the power to assess, levy and collect benefit assessments upon the
273 land and buildings in the district which, in its judgment, are benefited
274 by the district improvements. Nothing in this subsection shall limit the
275 power of the town of East Hartford to duly assess, levy and collect

276 benefit assessments upon land and buildings in the district.

277 (f) (1) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes,
278 including sections 7-324 to 7-329, inclusive, of the general statutes, the
279 district shall have the power to fix, revise, charge, collect, abate and
280 forgive taxes, fees, rents and benefit assessments, and other charges for
281 the cost of the district improvements, financing costs, operating
282 expenses and other services and commodities furnished or supplied to
283 the real property in the district in accordance with the provisions of the
284 general statutes applicable to districts established under section 7-325 of
285 the general statutes as provided in this section and in the manner
286 prescribed by the district. Notwithstanding any provision of the general
287 statutes, the district may pay the entire cost of any such improvements,
288 including the costs of financing such improvements, capitalized interest
289 and the funding of any reserve funds necessary to secure such financing
290 or the debt service of bonds or notes issued to finance such costs, from
291 taxes, fees, rents, benefit assessments or other revenues and may assess,
292 levy and collect such taxes, fees, rents or benefit assessments
293 concurrently with the issuance of bonds, notes or other obligations to
294 finance such improvements based on the estimated cost of the
295 improvements before the acquisition or construction of the district
296 improvements or upon the completion or acquisition of such
297 improvements. Nothing in this subdivision shall limit the power of the
298 town of East Hartford to duly fix, revise, charge, collect, abate and
299 forgive taxes, fees, rents and benefit assessments upon property in the
300 district.

301 (2) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes, whenever
302 the district constructs, improves, extends, equips, rehabilitates, repairs,
303 acquires or provides a grant for any district improvements or finances
304 the cost of such improvements, the district may assess a benefit
305 assessment, in a manner prescribed by the district, upon any property
306 benefited by such improvements. The balance of such costs not
307 recovered by a benefit assessment shall be paid from the general funds
308 of the district. The district may provide for the payment of such benefit
309 assessments in annual installments, not exceeding thirty such

310 installments, and may forgive such benefit assessments in any single
311 year without causing the remainder of installments of benefit
312 assessments to be forgiven. Benefit assessments to buildings or
313 structures constructed or expanded after the initial benefit assessment
314 may be assessed as if the new or expanded buildings or structures had
315 existed at the time of the original benefit assessment. The provision of
316 open space within the district is deemed a benefit to all the property in
317 the district. Nothing in this subdivision shall limit the power of the town
318 of East Hartford to duly assess benefit assessments upon property in the
319 district.

320 (3) To provide for the collection and enforcement of its taxes, fees,
321 rents, benefit assessments and other charges, the district is granted all
322 the powers and privileges as districts organized pursuant to section 7-
323 325 of the general statutes, and as held by the town of East Hartford or
324 as otherwise provided in this section. Such taxes, fees, rents or benefit
325 assessments, if not paid when due, shall constitute a lien upon the
326 premises served and a charge against the owners of such premises,
327 which lien and charge shall bear interest at the same rate as delinquent
328 property taxes pursuant to section 12-146 of the general statutes. Each
329 such lien may be continued, recorded and released in the manner
330 provided for property tax liens and shall take precedence over all other
331 liens or encumbrances except a lien for taxes of the town of East
332 Hartford. Each such lien may be continued, recorded and released in the
333 manner provided for property tax liens.

334 (4) The board shall adopt and revise the budget, taxes, fees, rents,
335 benefit assessments and any other charges of the district of general
336 application at least annually, not more than thirty days before the
337 beginning of the fiscal year in accordance with procedures established
338 by the board at a meeting called by the board, which shall include a
339 requirement that interested persons be given notice and an opportunity
340 to be heard. The board shall hold at least two public hearings on its
341 schedule of fees, rates, rents, benefit assessments and other charges or
342 any revision of such fees, rates, rents, benefit assessments and charges
343 before adoption, notice of which shall be delivered to the mayor and

344 town council of the town of East Hartford and be published in a
345 newspaper of general circulation in said town not less than ten days
346 before the hearing. Not later than the date of the publication, the board
347 shall make available to the public and deliver to the mayor and the town
348 council of the town of East Hartford the proposed schedule of fees, rates,
349 rents, benefit assessments and other charges.

350 (5) No benefit assessment shall be made without a public hearing
351 before the board. The owner of the property to be assessed shall have an
352 opportunity to be heard concerning the proposed assessment at such
353 hearing. Notice of the time, place and purpose of such hearing shall be
354 published not less than ten days before the date of such hearing in a
355 newspaper having a general circulation in the town of East Hartford,
356 and a copy of such notice shall be mailed to the owner of any property
357 that may be impacted by such assessment at such owner's address on
358 the most recent grand list of the town or at any address of which the
359 board may have knowledge. A copy of any proposed assessment shall
360 be made available for inspection in the office of the district clerk for not
361 less than ten days before the date of such hearing.

362 (6) When the board has determined the amount of the assessment to
363 be levied, the board shall file a copy of such assessment in the office of
364 the district clerk. Not later than five days after such filing, the board
365 shall cause a copy of such assessment to be published in a newspaper
366 having a general circulation in the town of East Hartford, and the district
367 shall mail a copy of such assessment to the owner of any property that
368 may be impacted by such assessment at such owner's address on the
369 most recent grand list of the town or at any other address of which the
370 board may have knowledge. Such publication and mailing shall state
371 the date on which such assessment was filed and that any appeals from
372 such assessment must be taken within twenty-one days after such filing.
373 Any person aggrieved by an assessment pursuant to this section may
374 appeal to the superior court for the judicial district in which the property
375 is located. The return date of such appeal shall be not less than twelve
376 and not more than thirty days after the service of such appeal. Such
377 appeal shall be privileged in assignment for trial. The court may appoint

378 a state referee to appraise the benefits to such property and to make a
379 report of such referee's doings to the court. The judgment of the court,
380 either confirming or altering such assessment, shall be final. No such
381 appeal shall stay proceedings for the collection of the particular
382 assessment upon which the appeal is predicated, but the appellant shall
383 be reimbursed for any overpayments made if, as a result of such appeal,
384 such appellant's assessment is reduced.

385 (7) If a benefit assessment is assessed and levied before the
386 acquisition or construction of the district improvements, the amount of
387 the benefit assessment shall be adjusted to reflect the actual cost of the
388 district improvements, including all financing costs, once such
389 improvements have been completed, should the actual cost be greater
390 than or less than the estimated costs. Benefit assessments shall be due
391 and payable at such times as are fixed by the board, provided the district
392 shall give notice of such due date not less than thirty days prior to such
393 due date by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the
394 town of East Hartford and by mailing such notice to the owners of an
395 assessed property at such owner's last-known address.

396 (g) (1) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes,
397 including sections 7-324 to 7-329, inclusive, of the general statutes,
398 whenever the district has authorized the acquisition or construction of
399 the district improvements or has made an appropriation therefor, the
400 district may authorize the issuance of (A) up to one hundred twenty-
401 five million dollars of bonds, notes or other obligations which may be
402 secured as to both principal and interest by (i) the full faith and credit of
403 the district, (ii) taxes, fees, revenues or benefit assessments, or (iii) a
404 combination of both; (B) bonds, notes or obligations exclusively secured
405 as to both principal and interest by fees, revenues, benefit assessments
406 or charges imposed by the district in relation to the property financed
407 by the bonds, notes or obligations; and (C) bonds, notes or obligations
408 to refund outstanding bonds, notes or obligations of the district. All such
409 bonds shall be issued to finance or refinance the cost of the district
410 improvements, the creation and maintenance of reserves required to sell
411 the bonds, notes or obligations and the cost of issuance of the bonds,

412 notes or obligations, provided no bonds shall be issued prior to the
413 district entering into an interlocal agreement with the town of East
414 Hartford, including at least one public hearing on the proposed
415 agreement and ratification by the town council of the town of East
416 Hartford. Such bonds, notes or obligations shall be authorized by
417 resolution of the board. The district is authorized to secure such bonds
418 by the full faith and credit of the district or by a pledge of or lien on all
419 or part of its taxes, fees, revenues, benefit assessments or charges. The
420 bonds of each issue shall be dated, shall bear interest at the rates and
421 shall mature at the time or times not exceeding thirty years from their
422 date or dates, as determined by the board, and may be redeemable
423 before maturity, at the option of the board, at the price or prices and
424 under the terms and conditions fixed by the board before the issuance
425 of the bonds. The board shall determine the form of the bonds, and the
426 manner of execution of the bonds, and shall fix the denomination of the
427 bonds and the place or places of payment of principal and interest,
428 which may be at any bank or trust company within this state and other
429 locations as designated by the board. In case any officer whose signature
430 or a facsimile of whose signature shall appear on any bonds or coupons
431 shall cease to be an officer before the delivery of the bonds, the signature
432 or facsimile shall nevertheless be valid and sufficient for all purposes
433 the same as if the officer had remained in office until the delivery.

434 (2) While any bonds or notes issued by the district remain
435 outstanding, the powers, duties or existence of the district shall not be
436 diminished or impaired in any way that will adversely affect the
437 interests and rights of the holders of the bonds or notes. The bonds or
438 notes issued under this section shall be payable solely by the district or
439 as special obligations payable from particular district revenues, and,
440 unless otherwise authorized by law, shall not be considered to
441 constitute a debt of the state or the town of East Hartford, or a pledge of
442 the full faith and credit of the state or the town of East Hartford. Any
443 bonds or notes issued by the district shall contain on their face a
444 statement to the effect that neither the state nor the town of East
445 Hartford shall be obliged to pay the principal of or the interest thereon,

446 and that neither the full faith and credit or taxing power of the state or
447 the town of East Hartford is pledged to the payment of the bonds or
448 notes. All bonds or notes issued under this section shall have all the
449 qualities and incidents of negotiable instruments as provided in title 42a
450 of the general statutes.

451 (h) (1) The board may authorize that the bonds be secured by a trust
452 agreement by and between the district and a corporate trustee. Such
453 trustee shall be any trust company or bank having the powers of a trust
454 company within this state. Such trust agreement may pledge or assign
455 the revenues. Either the resolution providing for the issuance of bonds
456 or the trust agreement may contain covenants or provisions for
457 protecting and enforcing the rights and remedies of the bondholders as
458 may be lawful, necessary, reasonable or appropriate.

459 (2) Any expenses incurred in carrying out the trust agreement may
460 be treated as an operating cost of the district. The pledge by any trust
461 agreement or resolution shall be valid and binding from when the
462 pledge is made. Any revenues or other moneys so pledged and held or
463 thereafter received by the board shall immediately be subject to the lien
464 of the pledge without any physical delivery thereof or further act, and
465 the lien of the pledge shall be valid and binding as against all parties
466 having claims of any kind in tort, contract or otherwise against the
467 board, irrespective of whether the parties have notice thereof.
468 Notwithstanding any provision of the Uniform Commercial Code,
469 neither this subsection nor the resolution or any trust agreement by
470 which a pledge is created need be filed or recorded except in the records
471 of the board, and no filing need be made under title 42a of the general
472 statutes.

473 (i) Bonds or notes issued under this section are hereby made
474 securities in which all public officers and public bodies of the state and
475 its political subdivisions, all insurance companies, trust companies,
476 banking associations, investment companies, executors, administrators,
477 trustees and other fiduciaries may properly and legally invest funds,
478 including capital in their control and belonging to them, and such bonds

479 shall be securities which may properly and legally be deposited with
480 and received by any state or municipal officer or any agency or political
481 subdivision of the state for any purpose for which the deposit of bonds
482 or notes of the state is now or may hereafter be authorized by law.

483 (j) Bonds may be issued under this section without obtaining the
484 consent of the state or the town of East Hartford and without any
485 proceedings or conditions unless required by this section, and the
486 validity of and security for any bonds issued by the district shall not be
487 affected by the existence or nonexistence of such consent or other
488 proceedings or conditions.

489 (k) The district and all its receipts, revenues, income and real and
490 personal property used for public purposes shall be exempt from
491 taxation and benefit assessments, and the district shall not be required
492 to pay any tax, excise or assessment to or from the state or any of its
493 political subdivisions. The principal and interest on bonds or notes
494 issued by the district shall be free from taxation, except for estate and
495 gift, franchise and excise taxes imposed by the state or any political
496 subdivision thereof, provided nothing in this section shall act to limit or
497 restrict the ability of the state or the town of East Hartford to tax the
498 individuals and companies, or their real or personal property or any
499 person living or business operating within the boundaries of the district.

500 (l) The board shall at all times keep accounts of its receipts,
501 expenditures, disbursements, assets and liabilities, which shall be open
502 to inspection by a duly appointed officer or duly appointed agent of the
503 state or the town of East Hartford. The fiscal year of the district shall
504 begin on July first and end on the following June thirtieth unless
505 otherwise established by section 7-327 of the general statutes. The
506 district shall be subject to an audit of its accounts in the manner
507 provided in the general statutes.

508 (m) (1) The district clerk shall submit quarterly project activity
509 reports to the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management and to
510 the chairpersons of the joint standing committee of the General

511 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to finance, revenue and
512 bonding. Such reports shall provide information and updates on the
513 projects undertaken by the district, including the status of the design,
514 financing, construction, sales and such other items as the secretary or
515 chairpersons may request.

516 (2) The district shall provide for the full disclosure of information
517 relating to the public financing and maintenance of the district
518 improvements. Such information shall be provided to any existing
519 residents and to all prospective residents of the district. The district shall
520 furnish each developer of a residential development within the district
521 with sufficient copies of such information to provide each prospective
522 initial purchaser of property in such district with a copy, and any
523 developer of a residential development within the district, when
524 required by law to provide a public offering statement, shall include a
525 copy of such information relating to the public financing and
526 maintenance of such improvements in the public offering statement.

527 (n) (1) This section shall be deemed to provide an additional,
528 alternative and complete method of accomplishing the purposes of this
529 section and exercising the powers authorized hereby and shall be
530 deemed and construed to be supplemental and additional to, and not in
531 derogation of, powers conferred upon the district by law and
532 particularly by sections 7-324 to 7-329, inclusive, of the general statutes,
533 provided if any provision of this section is inconsistent with any general
534 statute or special act, or any resolution or ordinance of the town of East
535 Hartford, this section shall control.

536 (2) Except as provided in this section and section 2 of this act, all other
537 statutes, ordinances, resolutions, rules and regulations of the state and
538 the town of East Hartford shall be applicable to the property, residents
539 and businesses located in the district. Nothing in this section or section
540 2 of this act shall in any way obligate the town of East Hartford to pay
541 any costs for the acquisition, construction, equipping or operation and
542 administration of the district improvements or to pledge any money or
543 taxes to pay debt service on bonds or notes issued by the district except

544 as may be agreed to in any interlocal agreements executed by the town
545 of East Hartford and the district.

546 (o) The town of East Hartford may, by vote of the town council,
547 merge the district into the town of East Hartford if no bonds are issued
548 by the district not later than ten years after the effective date of this
549 section or after the bonds authorized by this section are no longer
550 outstanding. Upon such merger, any property that is owned by the
551 district shall be conveyed to the town of East Hartford.

552 (p) This section, being necessary for the welfare of the town of East
553 Hartford and its inhabitants, shall be liberally construed to effect the
554 purposes hereof.

555 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) Notwithstanding any
556 provision of the general statutes, unless otherwise required by federal
557 law, the provisions of this section shall govern the issuance of any state
558 approval for district improvements concerning the Port Eastside
559 Infrastructure Improvement District established pursuant to section 1 of
560 this act. If the district enters into a written agreement with any public
561 entity for work to be performed in connection with the district
562 improvements, including, but not limited to, obtaining a permit, license
563 or governmental approval, acquiring real property or construction of
564 sewer, water, steam or other utility connections, any administrative
565 action taken by such public entity in connection with such work shall be
566 governed by the provisions of this section unless otherwise required by
567 federal law or any other agreement to which such public entity is bound.

568 (b) Any approval for district improvements shall be issued by the
569 commissioner with jurisdiction over such approval, or such other state
570 official as such commissioner shall designate, and no other agency,
571 commission, council, committee, panel or other body other than such
572 commissioner, unless specifically designated by such commissioner,
573 shall have jurisdiction over any such approval. No notice of a tentative
574 or final determination regarding any such approval and no notice of any
575 such approval shall be required except as provided in this section.

576 (c) Any application for an approval for district improvements
577 required by any applicable provision of the general statutes shall be
578 submitted to the commissioner having jurisdiction as provided in this
579 subsection. The commissioner shall, to the extent practicable in the
580 discretion of the commissioner, adopt a master process to consider
581 multiple licenses, permits, approvals and administrative actions
582 pursuant to this section. Unless denied by the commissioner, any license
583 or permit shall be issued, approval shall be granted as requested and
584 administrative action shall be taken not later than ten business days
585 after the date of submission of any such application unless a hearing is
586 required to be held concerning such application. Such application shall
587 be deemed granted as requested on the eleventh business day after a
588 hearing is held on such application unless the commissioner has denied
589 such application or approved such application with conditions. Any
590 requirement for a permit or inspection by the State Building Inspector
591 or State Fire Marshal shall be satisfied if the district obtains a
592 certification from an engineer or other appropriate professional duly
593 certified or licensed in the state certifying that the work in connection
594 with the district improvements, to the extent such work is subject to
595 approval by the State Building Inspector or State Fire Marshal, is in
596 compliance with the State Building Code or fire code and safety
597 regulations, as applicable.

598 (d) Any hearing regarding all or part of the district improvements
599 shall be conducted by the commissioner. Notice of any such hearing
600 shall be published in a newspaper having a general circulation in the
601 town of East Hartford not more than ten and not less than five days
602 before such hearing.

603 (e) Any application, documentation or other records (1) submitted to
604 a commissioner, and (2) pertaining to an application for an approval for
605 district improvements, together with all records of the proceedings of
606 the commissioner relating to any such application, shall be a public
607 record and shall be made, maintained and disclosed in accordance with
608 the provisions of chapter 14 of the general statutes.

609 (f) In rendering a decision on any application for an approval for
610 district improvements, a commissioner shall weigh all competent
611 material and substantial evidence presented by the applicant and the
612 public. The commissioner shall issue written findings and
613 determinations upon which any such decision is based. Such findings
614 and determinations shall consist of evidence presented, including such
615 information as the commissioner deems appropriate, provided such
616 information, to the extent applicable, relates to any major adverse health
617 or environmental impact of the overall district improvements. The
618 commissioner may reverse or modify any order or action at any time
619 upon the commissioner's own motion. The procedure for such reversal
620 or modification shall be the same as the procedure for the original
621 proceeding.

622 (g) Any administrative action taken by any commissioner in
623 connection with the district improvements may be appealed by a party
624 aggrieved by such action to the superior court for the judicial district of
625 Hartford in accordance with the provisions of section 4-183 of the
626 general statutes. Such appeal shall be brought not more than ten days
627 after the date the commissioner mails to the parties to the proceeding a
628 notice of such order, decision or action by certified mail, return receipt
629 requested. The appellant shall serve a copy of the appeal on each party
630 listed in the final order, decision or action at the address shown in such
631 decision. Failure to make such service within the ten days on parties
632 other than the commissioner who rendered the final order, decision or
633 action may not, in the discretion of the court, deprive the court of
634 jurisdiction over the appeal. Not later than ten days following the
635 service of such appeal, or within such further time as may be allowed
636 by the court, the commissioner who rendered such decision shall cause
637 any portion of the record that had not been transcribed to be transcribed
638 and shall cause the original or a certified copy of the entire record of the
639 proceeding appealed from to be transmitted to the reviewing court. The
640 record shall include the commissioner's findings of fact and conclusions
641 of law, separately stated. If more than one commissioner has jurisdiction
642 over the matter, such commissioners shall issue joint findings of fact and

643 conclusions of law. The appeal shall state the reasons upon which such
644 appeal is predicated and, notwithstanding any provisions of the general
645 statutes, shall not stay the development of the improvements. The
646 commissioner who rendered the decision shall appear as the
647 respondent. Appeals to the superior court shall be privileged matters
648 and shall be heard as soon after the return date as practicable. The court
649 shall render its decision not later than twenty-one days after the date
650 that the entire record with the transcript is filed with the court by the
651 commissioner who rendered the decision.

652 (h) (1) In an appeal pursuant to subsection (g) of this section, the court
653 shall not substitute its judgment for that of the commissioner as to the
654 weight of the evidence presented on a question of fact. The court shall
655 affirm the decision of the commissioner unless the court finds that
656 substantial rights of the party appealing the decision have been
657 materially prejudiced because the administrative findings, inferences,
658 conclusions or decisions of the commissioner are: (A) In violation of
659 constitutional or statutory provisions, (B) in excess of the statutory
660 authority of the commissioner, (C) made upon unlawful procedure, (D)
661 affected by an error of law, (E) clearly erroneous in view of the reliable,
662 probative and substantial evidence on the whole record, or (F) arbitrary,
663 capricious or characterized by abuse of discretion or clearly
664 unwarranted exercise of discretion.

665 (2) If the court finds material prejudice, it may sustain the appeal, and
666 upon sustaining an appeal may render a judgment that modifies the
667 decision of the commissioner, orders particular action of the
668 commissioner or orders the commissioner to take such action as may be
669 necessary to effect a particular action. The commissioner may issue a
670 permit consistent with such judgment. An applicant may file an
671 amended application, and the commissioner may consider such
672 amended application for an approval for district improvements
673 following such court action.

674 (i) Except as provided in this section, the district improvements shall
675 be exempt from the provisions of sections 14-311 to 14-314d, inclusive,

676 of the general statutes.

677 Sec. 3. (*Effective from passage*) (a) As used in this section:

678 (1) "District" means the Park City Landing Infrastructure
679 Improvement District, which may be established as a body politic and
680 corporate pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, situated in the city
681 of Bridgeport, county of Fairfield and state of Connecticut and bounded
682 and described as follows: Beginning at the intersection of the northern
683 right-of-way line of I-95 and centerline of Kossuth Street; thence
684 southwesterly along the northern right-of-way line of I-95 to the
685 northern right-of-way line of Stratford Avenue-CT Route 130; thence
686 westerly along the northern right-of-way-line of Stratford Avenue-CT
687 Route 130 to the United States Pierhead Line along the eastern side of
688 the Pequonnock River; thence northerly along the United States
689 Pierhead Line to the intersection of the United States Pierhead Line and
690 the United States Bulkhead Line; thence northerly along the United
691 States Pierhead Line, the United States Bulkhead Line and the mean
692 high water line of the Pequonnock River to the southwestern line of The
693 State of Connecticut Metro North Railroad right-of-way; thence
694 northeasterly along the State of Connecticut Metro North Railroad right-
695 of-way to the southern right-of-way line of Pulaski Street; thence
696 easterly along the southern right-of-way line of Pulaski Street to the
697 discontinued western right-of-way line of Noble Avenue; thence
698 southerly along the discontinued western right-of-way line of Noble
699 Avenue to the discontinued southern right-of-way line of Burroughs
700 Street; thence easterly along the discontinued southern right-of-way line
701 of Burroughs Street to the discontinued eastern right-of-way line of
702 Noble Avenue; thence northerly along the discontinued eastern right-
703 of-way line of Noble Avenue to the discontinued northern right-of-way
704 line of Burroughs Street; thence easterly along the discontinued
705 northern right-of-way line of Burroughs Street to the westerly boundary
706 line of 363 Kossuth Street; thence northerly along the boundary line of
707 363 Kossuth Street and 1 Noble Avenue to the southerly boundary line
708 of 401 Pulaski Street; thence easterly along the boundary of 401 Pulaski
709 Street and 363 Pulaski Street to the centerline of Kossuth Street; thence

710 southerly along the centerline of Kossuth Street to an extension of the
711 northern boundary of 83 Howe Street; thence easterly crossing Kossuth
712 Street and continuing along the boundary of 83 Howe Street and 46, 68
713 and 76 Seymour Street to the eastern boundary of 83 Howe Street; thence
714 southerly along the boundary of 83 Howe Street and 523 and 503 East
715 Main Street to the northern right-of-way line of Howe Street; thence
716 westerly along the northern right-of-way line of Howe Street and
717 continuing to the centerline of Kossuth Street; thence southerly along
718 the centerline of Kossuth Street to the point of beginning;

719 (2) "District improvements" means improvements for any or all of the
720 following public purposes: To (A) light streets, (B) plant and care for
721 shade and ornamental trees, (C) plan, lay out, acquire, construct,
722 maintain and finance roads, sidewalks, crosswalks, drains, sewers,
723 water lines, parking facilities, open space, bulkhead repairs, dredging
724 and construction, environmental remediation and other infrastructure
725 improvements, (D) acquire, construct, maintain and regulate the use of
726 recreational facilities, and (E) plan, lay out, acquire, construct,
727 reconstruct, repair, maintain, supervise and manage a flood or erosion
728 control system. District improvements include any off-site locations or
729 improvements made outside the district but related to or made
730 necessary by the establishment of the district, including, but not limited
731 to any transit enhancements, bridges, roadways, traffic signalization,
732 easements, environmental protection devices or structures, storm or
733 sanitary sewer lines, water lines, utility lines, and waterfront
734 improvements along the Pequonnock River;

735 (3) "Benefit assessment" means an assessment by the district for the
736 proportion of any cost, or estimated cost, and any associated finance cost
737 whenever the district constructs, improves, extends, equips,
738 rehabilitates, repairs, acquires or provides a grant for any district
739 improvements or finances the cost of such improvements;

740 (4) "Voter" means (A) any person who is an elector of the district, (B)
741 any citizen of the United States eighteen years of age or older who,
742 jointly or severally, is liable to the district for taxes assessed against such

743 citizen on an assessment of not less than one thousand dollars on the
744 last-completed grand list of such district, as the case may be, or who
745 would be so liable if not entitled to an exemption under subdivision (17),
746 (19), (22), (23) or (26) of section 12-81 of the general statutes, or (C) any
747 holder of record of an interest in real property within the district;

748 (5) "Bonds" means bonds, notes or other obligations authorized by
749 this section, and refunding bonds, notes or other obligations to refinance
750 the same; and

751 (6) "Interlocal agreement" means an agreement, entered into in
752 accordance with section 7-339c of the general statutes, between the
753 district and the city of Bridgeport relating to the sharing of incremental
754 tax revenues collected on real property within the district.

755 (b) (1) The mayor of the city of Bridgeport shall, upon the petition of
756 fifteen or more persons eligible to vote in said city specifying the district
757 for any or all of the purposes set forth in this section, call a meeting of
758 the voters to act upon such petition. Not later than thirty days after
759 receipt of such petition, the mayor shall designate the time and place for
760 such meeting. Not less than fourteen days before such meeting, the
761 mayor shall publish notice of such meeting in two successive issues of a
762 newspaper published or having general circulation in the city of
763 Bridgeport. Not later than twenty-four hours before such meeting, (A)
764 two hundred or more voters or ten per cent of the total number of voters
765 of such proposed district, whichever is less, may petition the mayor, in
766 writing, for a referendum of the voters of such proposed district, or (B)
767 the mayor may, in the mayor's discretion, order a referendum of the
768 voters of such proposed district on the sole question of whether the
769 proposed district should be established. Any such referendum shall be
770 held not less than seven and not more than fourteen days after the
771 receipt of such petition or the date of such order, on a date to be set by
772 the mayor for a vote by paper ballots or by a "yes" or "no" vote on the
773 voting machines, during the hours between twelve o'clock noon and
774 eight o'clock p.m. Notwithstanding the provisions of any special act, the
775 city may provide for an earlier hour for opening the polls by vote of its

city council, provided such opening of the polls is not earlier than six o'clock a.m. If voters representing at least two-thirds of the assessments of holders of record within the proposed district cast votes in favor of establishing the proposed district in such referendum, the mayor shall reconvene such meeting not later than seven days after such referendum. Upon approval of the petition for the proposed district by voters representing at least two-thirds of the assessments of holders of record within the proposed district present at such meeting, or, if a referendum is held, upon the reconvening of such meeting after such referendum, the voters may establish the district. The district shall, upon the filing of the first report filed as provided in subsection (c) of section 7-325 of the general statutes, be a body corporate and politic and have the powers provided in sections 7-324 to 7-329, inclusive, of the general statutes, not inconsistent with the general statutes and this section, concerning the purposes for which the district was established and that are necessary for the accomplishment of such purposes, including the power to lay and collect taxes. The clerk of the district shall cause the name of the district and a description of the district's territorial limits to be recorded in, and a caveat be placed upon, the land records of the city of Bridgeport. Nothing in this subdivision shall limit the power of the city of Bridgeport to lay and collect taxes upon property in the district.

(2) At the meeting called for the purpose of establishing the district as provided in subdivision (1) of this subsection, the voters may establish the district for the purpose of making any or all of the district improvements. The district may contract with a town, city, borough or other district for the carrying out of any of the purposes specified in this subsection or for the purchase or sale of any of the improvements for which the district was established.

(3) (A) At the meeting called for the purpose of establishing the district as provided in subdivision (1) of this subsection, the voters shall fix the date of the annual meeting of the voters for the election of district officers and the transaction of such other business as may properly come before such annual meeting. At such meeting of the district, the voters shall elect a president, vice-president, five directors, a clerk and a

810 treasurer to serve until the first annual meeting for the election of
811 officers and thereafter such officers shall be elected annually. Upon the
812 district's organization and at all times thereafter, one director shall be
813 appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the mayor of the city of
814 Bridgeport.

815 (B) At the first annual meeting of the district, the directors not
816 appointed by the mayor shall be elected to serve for one, two, three or
817 four years, respectively, and thereafter such directors shall be elected to
818 serve for four-year terms as each term ends. Not fewer than three
819 members of the board of directors shall be residents of this state.

820 (C) Special meetings of the district may be called on the application
821 of ten per cent of the total number of voters of such district or twenty of
822 the voters of such district, whichever is less, or by the president or any
823 three directors upon giving notice as provided in this section. Any
824 special meeting called on the application of the voters shall be held not
825 later than twenty-one days after receiving such application.

826 (D) Notice of the holding of the annual meeting and all special
827 meetings shall (i) be given by publication of a notice of such meetings in
828 a newspaper having a general circulation in the city of Bridgeport not
829 less than ten days before the day of any such meeting, (ii) be signed by
830 the president or any three directors, and (iii) designate the time and
831 place of such meeting and the business to be transacted at such meeting.

832 (E) Two hundred or more persons or ten per cent of the total number
833 of voters of such district, whichever is less, may submit a written
834 petition to the clerk of such district not less than twenty-four hours prior
835 to any such meeting, requesting that any item or items on the call of such
836 meeting be submitted to the voters of the district not less than seven nor
837 more than fourteen days thereafter, on a day to be set by the district
838 meeting or, if the district meeting does not set a date, by the board of
839 directors, for a vote by paper ballots or by a "yes" or "no" vote on the
840 voting machines, during the hours between twelve o'clock noon and
841 eight o'clock p.m., except that the district may, by vote of its board of

842 directors, provide for an earlier hour for opening the polls but not earlier
843 than six o'clock a.m. The paper ballots or voting machine ballot labels,
844 as the case may be, shall be provided by the clerk. When such a petition
845 has been filed with the clerk, the president, after completion of other
846 business and after discussion, shall adjourn such meeting and order
847 such vote on such item or items in accordance with the petition, and any
848 item so voted may be rescinded in the same manner. The clerk shall
849 phrase such item or items in a form suitable for printing on such paper
850 ballots or ballot labels.

851 (F) At any annual or special meeting, the voters may, by a majority
852 vote of those present, discontinue any purposes for which the district is
853 established or undertake any additional purpose or purposes
854 enumerated in subdivision (2) of this subsection.

855 (4) (A) A quorum for the transaction of business at the meeting called
856 for the purpose of establishing the district, as provided in subdivision
857 (1) of this subsection, shall be either fifteen voters of such district or a
858 majority of the holders of record of interests in real property within such
859 district, as long as the assessments of such holders of record constitute
860 more than one-half of the total of assessments for all interests in real
861 property within such district. If fifteen voters or a majority of the holders
862 of record of interests in real property within such district are not present
863 at such meeting or the assessments of such holders of record constitute
864 less than one-half of the total of assessments for all interests in real
865 property within such district, the mayor may adjourn such meeting
866 until at least fifteen voters or a majority of the holders of record of
867 interests in real property within such district are present and the
868 assessments of such holders of record constitute more than one-half of
869 the total of assessments for all interests in real property within such
870 district.

871 (B) For the transaction of business at any other meeting of the district,
872 a quorum shall be either fifteen voters of the district or a majority of the
873 holders of record of interests in real property within such district,
874 provided the assessments for such holders of record constitute more

875 than one-half of the total of assessments for all interests in real property
876 within such district. If fifteen voters or a majority of the holders of record
877 of interests in real property within such district are not present at such
878 meeting or the assessments of such holders of record constitute less than
879 one-half of the total assessments for all interests in real property within
880 such district, the president of the district or, in such president's absence,
881 the vice-president may adjourn such meeting until at least fifteen voters
882 or a majority of the holders of record of interests in real property within
883 such district are present and the assessments of such holders of record
884 constitute more than one-half of the total of assessments for all interests
885 in real property within such district. Any meeting of the district where
886 a quorum is present may be adjourned by a vote of a majority of the
887 voters voting on the question.

888 (5) In any case in which an action for a vote by the voters of the district
889 is to be initiated by the petition of such voters, in addition to such other
890 requirements as the general statutes or any special act may impose, such
891 petition shall be on a form prescribed or approved by the clerk of such
892 district, and each page of such petition shall contain a statement, signed
893 under penalties of false statement, by the person who circulated the
894 same, setting forth such person's name and address, and stating that (A)
895 each voter whose name appears on such page signed the same in person
896 in the presence of the person who circulated the petition, (B) such person
897 either knows each such voter or that the voter satisfactorily identified
898 such voter to such person, and (C) each signature on such page was
899 obtained not earlier than six months before the filing of such petition.
900 Any page of a petition that does not contain such a statement by the
901 person who circulated such petition shall be invalid. Any person who
902 makes a false statement in the statement required by this subdivision
903 shall be subject to the penalty for false statements pursuant to section
904 53a-157b of the general statutes. Any petition circulated pursuant to this
905 subdivision by a person who is not a voter of the district shall be invalid.

906 (c) If (1) the officers of the district vote to terminate the district's
907 corporate existence, or (2) the district clerk receives a petition signed by
908 ten per cent of the total voters of such district or twenty of the voters of

909 such district, whichever is less, applying for a special meeting to vote on
910 the termination of the district, the clerk shall call a special meeting of the
911 voters of such district. The notice of such meeting shall be signed by the
912 officers of the district and be advertised as required by section 7-325 of
913 the general statutes. Not later than twenty-four hours before any such
914 meeting, two hundred or more voters or ten per cent of the total number
915 of voters, whichever is less, may petition the clerk of the district, in
916 writing, that a referendum on the question of whether the district should
917 be terminated be held in the manner provided in section 7-327 of the
918 general statutes. If, at such meeting, a two-thirds majority of the voters
919 present vote to terminate the corporate existence of the district, or, if a
920 referendum is held, two-thirds of the voters casting votes in such
921 referendum vote to terminate the corporate existence of the district, the
922 officers shall terminate the affairs of such district. The district shall pay
923 all outstanding indebtedness of the district and transfer the balance of
924 the assets of such district to the city in which the district is located upon
925 the approval of the city council of the city of Bridgeport. The district
926 shall not be terminated under this section until all of its outstanding
927 indebtedness is paid unless the city council of the city of Bridgeport
928 agrees, in writing, to assume such indebtedness. On completion of the
929 duties of the officers of such district, the clerk shall cause a certificate of
930 the vote of such meeting to be recorded in the land records of the city of
931 Bridgeport and the clerk shall notify the Secretary of the Office of Policy
932 and Management of such district's termination.

933 (d) (1) At any meeting of the district, any tenant in common of any
934 interest in real property shall have a vote equal to the fraction of such
935 tenant in common's ownership of such interest. Any joint tenant of any
936 interest in real property shall vote as if each such tenant owned an equal
937 fractional share of such real property. A corporation shall have its vote
938 cast by the chief executive officer of such corporation, or such officer's
939 designee. An entity eligible to vote in the district that is not a corporation
940 shall have its vote cast by a person authorized by such entity to cast its
941 vote. No owner shall have more than one vote.

942 (2) No holder of record of an interest in real property shall be

943 precluded from participating in any district meeting or referendum
944 because of the form of entity that holds such interest, whether such
945 holder of record is (A) a corporation, partnership, unincorporated
946 association, trustee, fiduciary, guardian, conservator or other form of
947 entity, or any combination thereof, or (B) an individual who holds
948 interests jointly or in common with another individual or individuals,
949 or with any one or more of the entities listed in subparagraph (A) of this
950 subdivision.

951 (e) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes, including
952 sections 7-324 to 7-329, inclusive, of the general statutes, the district shall
953 have the power to assess, levy and collect benefit assessments upon the
954 land and buildings in the district which, in its judgment, are benefited
955 by the district improvements. Nothing in this subsection shall limit the
956 power of the city of Bridgeport to duly assess, levy and collect benefit
957 assessments upon land and buildings in the district.

958 (f) (1) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes,
959 including sections 7-324 to 7-329, inclusive, of the general statutes, the
960 district shall have the power to fix, revise, charge, collect, abate and
961 forgive taxes, fees, rents and benefit assessments, and other charges for
962 the cost of the district improvements, financing costs, operating
963 expenses and other services and commodities furnished or supplied to
964 the real property in the district in accordance with the provisions of the
965 general statutes applicable to districts established under section 7-325 of
966 the general statutes as provided in this section and in the manner
967 prescribed by the district. Notwithstanding any provision of the general
968 statutes, the district may pay the entire cost of any such improvements,
969 including the costs of financing such improvements, capitalized interest
970 and the funding of any reserve funds necessary to secure such financing
971 or the debt service of bonds or notes issued to finance such costs, from
972 taxes, fees, rents, benefit assessments or other revenues and may assess,
973 levy and collect such taxes, fees, rents or benefit assessments
974 concurrently with the issuance of bonds, notes or other obligations to
975 finance such improvements based on the estimated cost of the
976 improvements before the acquisition or construction of the district

977 improvements or upon the completion or acquisition of such
978 improvements. Nothing in this subdivision shall limit the power of the
979 city of Bridgeport to duly fix, revise, charge, collect, abate and forgive
980 taxes, fees, rents and benefit assessments upon property in the district.

981 (2) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes, whenever
982 the district constructs, improves, extends, equips, rehabilitates, repairs,
983 acquires or provides a grant for any district improvements or finances
984 the cost of such improvements, the district may assess a benefit
985 assessment, in a manner prescribed by the district, upon any property
986 benefited by such improvements. The balance of such costs not
987 recovered by a benefit assessment shall be paid from the general funds
988 of the district. The district may provide for the payment of such benefit
989 assessments in annual installments, not exceeding thirty such
990 installments, and may forgive such benefit assessments in any single
991 year without causing the remainder of installments of benefit
992 assessments to be forgiven. Benefit assessments to buildings or
993 structures constructed or expanded after the initial benefit assessment
994 may be assessed as if the new or expanded buildings or structures had
995 existed at the time of the original benefit assessment. The provision of
996 open space within the district is deemed a benefit to all the property in
997 the district. Nothing in this subdivision shall limit the power of the city
998 of Bridgeport to duly assess benefit assessments upon property in the
999 district.

1000 (3) To provide for the collection and enforcement of its taxes, fees,
1001 rents, benefit assessments and other charges, the district is granted all
1002 the powers and privileges as districts organized pursuant to section 7-
1003 325 of the general statutes, and as held by the city of Bridgeport or as
1004 otherwise provided in this section. Such taxes, fees, rents or benefit
1005 assessments, if not paid when due, shall constitute a lien upon the
1006 premises served and a charge against the owners of such premises,
1007 which lien and charge shall bear interest at the same rate as delinquent
1008 property taxes pursuant to section 12-146 of the general statutes. Each
1009 such lien may be continued, recorded and released in the manner
1010 provided for property tax liens and shall take precedence over all other

1011 liens or encumbrances except a lien for taxes of the city of Bridgeport.
1012 Each such lien may be continued, recorded and released in the manner
1013 provided for property tax liens.

1014 (4) The board shall adopt and revise the budget, taxes, fees, rents,
1015 benefit assessments and any other charges of the district of general
1016 application at least annually, not more than thirty days before the
1017 beginning of the fiscal year in accordance with procedures established
1018 by the board at a meeting called by the board, which shall include a
1019 requirement that interested persons be given notice and an opportunity
1020 to be heard. The board shall hold at least two public hearings on its
1021 schedule of fees, rates, rents, benefit assessments and other charges or
1022 any revision of such fees, rates, rents, benefit assessments and charges
1023 before adoption, notice of which shall be delivered to the mayor and city
1024 council of the city of Bridgeport and be published in a newspaper of
1025 general circulation in said city not less than ten days before the hearing.
1026 Not later than the date of the publication, the board shall make available
1027 to the public and deliver to the mayor and the city council of the city of
1028 Bridgeport the proposed schedule of fees, rates, rents, benefit
1029 assessments and other charges.

1030 (5) No benefit assessment shall be made without a public hearing
1031 before the board. The owner of the property to be assessed shall have an
1032 opportunity to be heard concerning the proposed assessment at such
1033 hearing. Notice of the time, place and purpose of such hearing shall be
1034 published not less than ten days before the date of such hearing in a
1035 newspaper having a general circulation in the city of Bridgeport, and a
1036 copy of such notice shall be mailed to the owner of any property that
1037 may be impacted by such assessment at such owner's address on the
1038 most recent grand list of the city or at any address of which the board
1039 may have knowledge. A copy of any proposed assessment shall be made
1040 available for inspection in the office of the district clerk for not less than
1041 ten days before the date of such hearing.

1042 (6) When the board has determined the amount of the assessment to
1043 be levied, the board shall file a copy of such assessment in the office of

1044 the district clerk. Not later than five days after such filing, the board
1045 shall cause a copy of such assessment to be published in a newspaper
1046 having a general circulation in the city of Bridgeport, and the district
1047 shall mail a copy of such assessment to the owner of any property that
1048 may be impacted by such assessment at such owner's address on the
1049 most recent grand list of the city or at any other address of which the
1050 board may have knowledge. Such publication and mailing shall state
1051 the date on which such assessment was filed and that any appeals from
1052 such assessment must be taken within twenty-one days after such filing.
1053 Any person aggrieved by an assessment pursuant to this section may
1054 appeal to the superior court for the judicial district in which the property
1055 is located. The return date of such appeal shall be not less than twelve
1056 and not more than thirty days after the service of such appeal. Such
1057 appeal shall be privileged in assignment for trial. The court may appoint
1058 a state referee to appraise the benefits to such property and to make a
1059 report of such referee's doings to the court. The judgment of the court,
1060 either confirming or altering such assessment, shall be final. No such
1061 appeal shall stay proceedings for the collection of the particular
1062 assessment upon which the appeal is predicated, but the appellant shall
1063 be reimbursed for any overpayments made if, as a result of such appeal,
1064 such appellant's assessment is reduced.

1065 (7) If a benefit assessment is assessed and levied before the
1066 acquisition or construction of the district improvements, the amount of
1067 the benefit assessment shall be adjusted to reflect the actual cost of the
1068 district improvements, including all financing costs, once such
1069 improvements have been completed, should the actual cost be greater
1070 than or less than the estimated costs. Benefit assessments shall be due
1071 and payable at such times as are fixed by the board, provided the district
1072 shall give notice of such due date not less than thirty days prior to such
1073 due date by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the city
1074 of Bridgeport and by mailing such notice to the owners of an assessed
1075 property at such owner's last-known address.

1076 (g) (1) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes,
1077 including sections 7-324 to 7-329, inclusive, of the general statutes

1078 whenever the district has authorized the acquisition or construction of
1079 the district improvements or has made an appropriation therefor, the
1080 district may authorize the issuance of (A) up to one hundred ninety
1081 million dollars of bonds, notes or other obligations which may be
1082 secured as to both principal and interest by (i) the full faith and credit of
1083 the district, (ii) taxes, fees, revenues or benefit assessments, or (iii) a
1084 combination of both; (B) bonds, notes or obligations exclusively secured
1085 as to both principal and interest by fees, revenues, benefit assessments
1086 or charges imposed by the district in relation to the property financed
1087 by the bonds, notes or obligations; and (C) bonds, notes or obligations
1088 to refund outstanding bonds, notes or obligations of the district. All such
1089 bonds shall be issued to finance or refinance the cost of the district
1090 improvements, the creation and maintenance of reserves required to sell
1091 the bonds, notes or obligations and the cost of issuance of the bonds,
1092 notes or obligations, provided no bonds shall be issued prior to the
1093 district entering into an interlocal agreement with the city of Bridgeport,
1094 including at least one public hearing on the proposed agreement and
1095 ratification by the city council of the city of Bridgeport. Such bonds,
1096 notes or obligations shall be authorized by resolution of the board. The
1097 district is authorized to secure such bonds by the full faith and credit of
1098 the district or by a pledge of or lien on all or part of its taxes, fees,
1099 revenues, benefit assessments or charges. The bonds of each issue shall
1100 be dated, shall bear interest at the rates and shall mature at the time or
1101 times not exceeding thirty years from their date or dates, as determined
1102 by the board, and may be redeemable before maturity, at the option of
1103 the board, at the price or prices and under the terms and conditions fixed
1104 by the board before the issuance of the bonds. The board shall determine
1105 the form of the bonds, and the manner of execution of the bonds, and
1106 shall fix the denomination of the bonds and the place or places of
1107 payment of principal and interest, which may be at any bank or trust
1108 company within this state and other locations as designated by the
1109 board. In case any officer whose signature or a facsimile of whose
1110 signature shall appear on any bonds or coupons shall cease to be an
1111 officer before the delivery of the bonds, the signature or facsimile shall
1112 nevertheless be valid and sufficient for all purposes the same as if the

1113 officer had remained in office until the delivery.

1114 (2) While any bonds or notes issued by the district remain
1115 outstanding, the powers, duties or existence of the district shall not be
1116 diminished or impaired in any way that will adversely affect the
1117 interests and rights of the holders of the bonds or notes. The bonds or
1118 notes issued under this section shall be payable solely by the district or
1119 as special obligations payable from particular district revenues, and,
1120 unless otherwise authorized by law, shall not be considered to
1121 constitute a debt of the state or the city of Bridgeport, or a pledge of the
1122 full faith and credit of the state or the city of Bridgeport. Any bonds or
1123 notes issued by the district shall contain on their face a statement to the
1124 effect that neither the state nor the city of Bridgeport shall be obliged to
1125 pay the principal of or the interest thereon, and that neither the full faith
1126 and credit or taxing power of the state or the city of Bridgeport is
1127 pledged to the payment of the bonds or notes. All bonds or notes issued
1128 under this section shall have all the qualities and incidents of negotiable
1129 instruments as provided in title 42a of the general statutes.

1130 (h) (1) The board may authorize that the bonds be secured by a trust
1131 agreement by and between the district and a corporate trustee. Such
1132 trustee shall be any trust company or bank having the powers of a trust
1133 company within this state. Such trust agreement may pledge or assign
1134 the revenues. Either the resolution providing for the issuance of bonds
1135 or the trust agreement may contain covenants or provisions for
1136 protecting and enforcing the rights and remedies of the bondholders as
1137 may be lawful, necessary, reasonable or appropriate.

1138 (2) Any expenses incurred in carrying out the trust agreement may
1139 be treated as an operating cost of the district. The pledge by any trust
1140 agreement or resolution shall be valid and binding from when the
1141 pledge is made. Any revenues or other moneys so pledged and held or
1142 thereafter received by the board shall immediately be subject to the lien
1143 of the pledge without any physical delivery thereof or further act, and
1144 the lien of the pledge shall be valid and binding as against all parties
1145 having claims of any kind in tort, contract or otherwise against the

1146 board, irrespective of whether the parties have notice thereof.
1147 Notwithstanding any provision of the Uniform Commercial Code,
1148 neither this subsection nor the resolution or any trust agreement by
1149 which a pledge is created need be filed or recorded except in the records
1150 of the board, and no filing need be made under title 42a of the general
1151 statutes.

1152 (i) Bonds or notes issued under this section are hereby made
1153 securities in which all public officers and public bodies of the state and
1154 its political subdivisions, all insurance companies, trust companies,
1155 banking associations, investment companies, executors, administrators,
1156 trustees and other fiduciaries may properly and legally invest funds,
1157 including capital in their control and belonging to them, and such bonds
1158 shall be securities which may properly and legally be deposited with
1159 and received by any state or municipal officer or any agency or political
1160 subdivision of the state for any purpose for which the deposit of bonds
1161 or notes of the state is now or may hereafter be authorized by law.

1162 (j) Bonds may be issued under this section without obtaining the
1163 consent of the state or the city of Bridgeport and without any
1164 proceedings or conditions unless required by this section, and the
1165 validity of and security for any bonds issued by the district shall not be
1166 affected by the existence or nonexistence of such consent or other
1167 proceedings or conditions.

1168 (k) The district and all its receipts, revenues, income and real and
1169 personal property used for public purposes shall be exempt from
1170 taxation and benefit assessments, and the district shall not be required
1171 to pay any tax, excise or assessment to or from the state or any of its
1172 political subdivisions. The principal and interest on bonds or notes
1173 issued by the district shall be free from taxation, except for estate and
1174 gift, franchise and excise taxes imposed by the state or any political
1175 subdivision thereof, provided nothing in this section shall act to limit or
1176 restrict the ability of the state or the city of Bridgeport to tax the
1177 individuals and companies, or their real or personal property or any
1178 person living or business operating within the boundaries of the district.

1179 (l) The board shall at all times keep accounts of its receipts,
1180 expenditures, disbursements, assets and liabilities, which shall be open
1181 to inspection by a duly appointed officer or duly appointed agent of the
1182 state or the city of Bridgeport. The fiscal year of the district shall begin
1183 on July first and end on the following June thirtieth unless otherwise
1184 established by section 7-327 of the general statutes. The district shall be
1185 subject to an audit of its accounts in the manner provided in the general
1186 statutes.

1187 (m) (1) The district clerk shall submit quarterly project activity
1188 reports to the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management and to
1189 the chairpersons of the joint standing committee of the General
1190 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to finance, revenue and
1191 bonding. Such reports shall provide information and updates on the
1192 projects undertaken by the district, including the status of the design,
1193 financing, construction, sales and such other items as the secretary or
1194 chairpersons may request.

1195 (2) The district shall provide for the full disclosure of information
1196 relating to the public financing and maintenance of the district
1197 improvements. Such information shall be provided to any existing
1198 residents and to all prospective residents of the district. The district shall
1199 furnish each developer of a residential development within the district
1200 with sufficient copies of such information to provide each prospective
1201 initial purchaser of property in such district with a copy, and any
1202 developer of a residential development within the district, when
1203 required by law to provide a public offering statement, shall include a
1204 copy of such information relating to the public financing and
1205 maintenance of such improvements in the public offering statement.

1206 (n) (1) This section shall be deemed to provide an additional,
1207 alternative and complete method of accomplishing the purposes of this
1208 section and exercising the powers authorized hereby and shall be
1209 deemed and construed to be supplemental and additional to, and not in
1210 derogation of, powers conferred upon the district by law and
1211 particularly by sections 7-324 to 7-329, inclusive, of the general statutes,

1212 provided if any provision of this section is inconsistent with any general
 1213 statute or special act, or any resolution or ordinance of the city of
 1214 Bridgeport, this section shall control.

1215 (2) Except as provided in this section, all other statutes, ordinances,
 1216 resolutions, rules and regulations of the state and the city of Bridgeport
 1217 shall be applicable to the property, residents and businesses located in
 1218 the district. Nothing in this section shall in any way obligate the city of
 1219 Bridgeport to pay any costs for the acquisition, construction, equipping
 1220 or operation and administration of the district improvements or to
 1221 pledge any money or taxes to pay debt service on bonds or notes issued
 1222 by the district except as may be agreed to in any interlocal agreements
 1223 executed by the city of Bridgeport and the district.

1224 (o) The city of Bridgeport may, by vote of the city council, merge the
 1225 district into the city of Bridgeport if no bonds are issued by the district
 1226 not later than ten years after the effective date of this section or after the
 1227 bonds authorized by this section are no longer outstanding. Upon such
 1228 merger, any property that is owned by the district shall be conveyed to
 1229 the city of Bridgeport.

1230 (p) This section, being necessary for the welfare of the city of
 1231 Bridgeport and its inhabitants, shall be liberally construed to effect the
 1232 purposes hereof.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>	New section

Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>	New section

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 26 \$	FY 27 \$
East Hartford	Cost	15,000-20,000	None
Bridgeport	Cost	25,000	None
East Hartford; Bridgeport	Potential Cost	See Below	See Below
East Hartford; Bridgeport	Potential Grand List Increase	See Below	See Below
East Hartford; Bridgeport	Potential Revenue Gain	See Below	See Below

Explanation

The bill establishes an infrastructure improvement district (Port Eastside) in the town of East Hartford, as well as an infrastructure improvement district (Park City Landing) in the city of Bridgeport, which results in the following impacts.

If fifteen or more voters petition to establish the districts, the municipalities would each incur

(a) minimal costs (estimated at less than \$1,000) associated with providing written notice of a meeting of the voters residing within the districts' limits, as well as holding the meeting; and

(b) potential costs associated with conducting a referendum, if (1) 200 or more voters, or 10% of the total number of voters in the district, whichever is less, petition for a referendum, or (2) the mayor orders a

referendum. The cost of holding a referendum in a town of East Hartford's size is estimated to range from \$15,000 - \$20,000, while the cost of holding a referendum in a city of Bridgeport's size is estimated to be \$25,000.

There is a potential cost to the East Hartford and Bridgeport for fees and costs associated with the establishment of an infrastructure improvement district, as it is unclear if the municipalities are responsible for any costs associated with the districts' establishment or if private developers will cover these costs.

To the extent that creation of Port Eastside and Park City Landing lead to property improvements, East Hartford and Bridgeport may experience increases in their grand lists.

The bill results in a potential revenue gain to East Hartford and Bridgeport should the districts contract with the municipalities for public services such as firefighting and town planning, and they receive reimbursement from the districts for those services.

East Hartford and Bridgeport may experience a potential cost from the bill as it permits the municipalities to incur the districts' debts in the event that the districts are terminated. The municipalities must agree in writing to assume any of the districts' outstanding debts.

House "A" struck the underlying bill in its entirety but retained the original fiscal impacts to the town of East Hartford. The amendment also resulted in fiscal impacts to the city of Bridgeport.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 7153 (as amended by House "A")******AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PORT EASTSIDE INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT IN THE TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD.*****SUMMARY**

This bill authorizes two special taxing districts to provide services and finance infrastructure improvements in designated areas: the Port Eastside Infrastructure Improvement District in East Hartford and the Park City Landing Infrastructure Improvement District in Bridgeport. The bill delineates each district's geographic boundaries and formation process, each of which is similar to the one for establishing special taxing districts under the statutes (statutory districts).

The bill authorizes the districts to levy taxes, charges, and benefit assessments and, after entering into an interlocal agreement with their respective municipalities, issue and secure bonds backed by these revenues and their full faith and credit. Specifically, the bill authorizes the Port Eastside district to issue up to \$125 million in bonds and the Park City Landing district to issue up to \$190 million in bonds.

The bill also sets an expedited process for state agency administrative actions, permit issuances, and approvals related to specified infrastructure improvements for the Port Eastside district that supersedes all statutory requirements for these approvals. It also (1) sets an expedited process for appeals of administrative actions taken by a state agency commissioner connected with these improvements and (2) exempts these improvements from specified traffic control and highway safety laws.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

*House Amendment "A" principally (1) expands the Port Eastside district's infrastructure improvements that are subject to the bill's expedited process for state actions, permits, and approvals; (2) expands the list of traffic laws from which these district improvements are exempt to include a law on signal light signs; (3) adds the provisions establishing the Park City Landing Infrastructure Improvement District; (4) changes the underlying bill's effective date, from October 1, 2025, to upon passage; and (5) makes various minor, technical, and conforming changes.

PORT EASTSIDE AND PARK CITY LANDING DISTRICT FORMATION (§§ 1 & 3)

Petition to Create the District

Under the bill, the districts are created only if the eligible voters approve their formation by following a process that is largely the same as the one for statutory districts. It starts when 15 or more people eligible to vote in the municipality petition the mayor to call a meeting of the district's eligible voters (as described below) to vote on the issue.

Decision

Each mayor has 30 days after receiving this petition to schedule the meeting. The meeting notice must be published in two successive issues of a newspaper published in the municipality or having general circulation there.

Up to 24 hours before the meeting, at least 200 voters or 10% of the proposed district's total eligible voters can petition the respective mayor for a referendum on the question of establishing the proposed district. Alternatively, the mayor can order a referendum on his own authority. In either case, the referendum must be held between 7 and 14 days after receiving the petition or ordering the referendum. The referendum is subject to the same procedural requirements as those for statutory districts.

Approving and Creating the District

Each district is formed if voters representing two-thirds of the

assessments of holders of record in the district that attend the meeting vote to create it (either at the meeting or referendum).

Each district clerk must then notify the municipality about its formation, a requirement that also applies to statutory districts. The report must identify the district's officers, include a copy of its charter or special act, and describe its organizational structure and finances. Once the clerk completes this step, the district becomes a body corporate and politic with the powers granted to it by the bill as well as the powers the law grants to statutory districts. Those powers include assessing and collecting property taxes. The clerk must also record the district's name and boundaries in the land records and include a caveat in those records.

The bill specifies that the provisions on approving and creating the district (e.g., provisions specifying that it acquires taxing powers when it is formally established) do not limit the municipality's power to tax property in the district.

Eligible Voters

For each district, the bill gives voting rights to the following people and entities:

1. district electors (registered voters);
2. U.S. citizens age 18 or older who are liable (or would be but for certain tax exemptions) to the district for property taxes on an assessment of at least \$1,000; and
3. holders of record of interests in real property in the district.

Holders of record include (1) business and legal entities and (2) people who hold interests jointly or in common with other people or entities. A corporation must cast its vote through its chief executive officer or his or her designee. A noncorporate entity must designate someone to cast its vote. Each owner gets only one vote, and the bill explicitly bans the district from excluding holders of record from

participating in its affairs.

In the case of tenants in common and joint tenants of any interest in real property, a tenant in common's vote equals the fraction of its ownership interest and a joint tenant votes as if each such tenant owned an equal fractional share.

ORGANIZING THE DISTRICT

Organizational Meeting

At the meeting called to establish the respective district (organizational meeting), voters may transact business if they have a quorum, which they have if:

1. 15 or more voters are present or
2. a majority of the holders of record are present and the assessed value of their properties exceeds half of the assessed value of all real property in the district.

The mayors can adjourn the meeting until a quorum is met.

District Purposes

At the organizational meeting, the voters may establish the district's purposes. In the case of the Port Eastside district, these "district improvements" include:

1. lighting streets;
2. planting and caring for shade and ornamental trees;
3. planning, laying out, acquiring, building, maintaining, and financing roads, sidewalks, crosswalks, drains, sewers, water lines, parking facilities, open space, waterside improvements, environmental remediation, and other infrastructure improvements; and
4. acquiring, building, maintaining, and regulating the use of recreational facilities.

They also include off-site locations or improvements made outside the district that are related to or necessary because of the district's establishment. Specifically, they include:

1. transit enhancements, bridges, roads, and traffic signals;
2. easements;
3. environmental protection devices, stormwater or sanitary sewer lines, water lines, and utility lines; and
4. waterfront improvements along the Connecticut River.

In the case of the Park City Landing district, its purposes generally may include those of statutory districts. They include financing many types of public improvements, such as (1) constructing and maintaining roads, sidewalks, drains, sewers, parking and recreational facilities, sewage treatment facilities, and flood or erosion control systems; and (2) repairing bulkheads, dredging, and remediating pollution.

Similar to Port Eastside, the Park City Landing district's purposes also include off-site locations or improvements made outside the district that are related to or necessary because of the district's establishment, including the improvements specified above (except that the waterfront improvements are along the Pequonnock River).

The bill allows each district to contract with a town, city, borough, or other district (1) for any of these purposes, just as existing law allows for statutory districts, and (2) to buy or sell any of the improvements for which the district was established.

Under the bill, a majority of each district's voters may discontinue a district purpose or take on any additional allowed purpose. They may do so at any annual or special meeting.

Governance. At the organizational meeting, voters must elect each district's nine officers and set the date of its annual meeting. The officers are generally the same as those for the statutory districts (president, vice

president, clerk, treasurer, and five directors) except that the bill requires the respective mayor to appoint one of the directors, who serves at the mayor's pleasure. It also requires that at least three directors be Connecticut residents.

Under the bill, the directors elected at the first annual meeting serve staggered one-, two-, three-, or four-year terms. At each subsequent annual meeting, any director elected to fill a vacancy serves a four-year term.

OPERATIONS

Meetings

The bill's provisions for calling special meetings and requiring votes on agenda items at regular and special meetings are generally the same as those that apply to statutory districts. The bill requires each district clerk to prescribe the form for submitting petitions and imposes generally the same requirements for these petitions that apply to statutory districts.

The quorum requirement is the same as the one for the organizational meeting, except that each district's president (or vice president if the president is absent), not the mayor, may adjourn the meeting until the quorum is met. A majority of voters can adjourn any district meeting where a quorum is present.

Activity Reports

Each district clerk must submit quarterly activity reports to the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) secretary and the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee. The reports must provide information and updates on the districts' projects, including their design, financing, construction, sales, and any other aspect the secretary or committee chairpersons request.

Financial Disclosure to Existing and Prospective Residents

Each district must disclose the public funds used to finance and maintain the improvements. They must disclose this information to all

existing and prospective residents and give each developer who constructs housing in the district enough documents containing this information to pass along to prospective buyers. Developers must also include the information in any public offering statement the law requires them to provide.

Financial Powers and Management

Each district board must adopt budgets and set taxes, fees, rents, benefit assessments, and other charges according to procedures that it must establish at a meeting held for that purpose. These procedures must include a requirement that interested people receive notice and a hearing opportunity. The bill requires the boards to adopt their budgets and revenue measures at least annually, within 30 days of the start of their fiscal year.

Each board must hold at least two public hearings on any proposed revenue measures and provide notice of these hearings to the respective mayor and city or town council and the public by publishing notice in a newspaper with general circulation in the municipality at least 10 days before. They must also make the proposed revenue schedule available to the mayor, council, and public by this date.

The bill authorizes each district to impose and forgive taxes, fees, rents, benefit assessments, and other charges to finance district improvements, cover its financing and operating costs, and pay for other services and commodities provided to district properties. The districts can use the revenue from these measures to pay the (1) entire cost of these improvements, including financing and related costs, or (2) debt service on bonds or notes issued to finance them. They can impose the taxes and other charges before or after they acquire or construct the improvements. The districts must base the taxes and charges they impose before acquiring or starting an improvement on the estimated costs. (The bill specifies that these provisions do not limit the municipality's power to duly impose, abate, and forgive taxes, fees, rents, and benefit assessments on district property.)

Each district has the same powers as statutory districts and its respective municipality to collect and enforce revenues. These include charging interest and imposing liens, which take precedence over all other liens except the municipality's tax liens.

The bill requires each district to maintain financial records, which it must make available to its respective municipal and state officials. The districts must comply with the municipal auditing act, as the law requires for statutory districts.

BENEFIT ASSESSMENTS

Authorization

The districts can assess land and buildings that benefit, in their judgment, from district-financed improvements. Specifically, whenever the districts construct, improve, extend, equip, rehabilitate, repair, acquire, or provide a grant for district improvements, or finances these improvements, they may assess a proportion of these costs on property that benefits from these improvements. (The bill specifies that this does not limit the respective municipality's power to impose benefit assessments on the district's land and buildings.)

Each district can decide how to apportion the costs among the properties benefiting from the improvements and pay the balance from the general revenues. The district may (1) require property owners to pay the benefit assessments in annual installments for up to 30 years and (2) forgive the benefit assessments in any given year without affecting future installments. It may assess buildings or structures constructed or expanded in the district after the initial benefit assessment is imposed as if they had existed at the time of the original benefit assessment. The district can also adjust assessments that were imposed before the improvements were completed to reflect their actual costs.

The bill specifies that providing open space in the district benefits all property within the district.

Public Hearing and Notice Requirement

Before imposing a benefit assessment, each district must hold at least one public hearing on the proposed assessment where assessed property owners have the opportunity to be heard. It must (1) publish a notice of the hearing's time, place, and purpose at least 10 days in advance in a newspaper with general circulation in the town and (2) mail a copy of this notice to affected property owners (at the address on the most recent grand list or any other known address). A copy of all proposed assessments must be made available for inspection with the district clerk at least 10 days before the hearing.

Once the respective board has determined the actual amount of the assessment, it must file a copy of the assessment with the district clerk and, within five days after the filing, publish and mail copies of it as described above for proposed assessments. The mailings and publications must state the date on which the assessment was filed and that all appeals must be taken within 21 days of that date.

Appeals

People aggrieved by a benefit assessment may appeal to the Superior Court for the judicial district in which the property is located. A court appeal (1) must have a return date that is between 12 and 30 days after the appeal is served and (2) is privileged in respect to its assignment for trial. The court may appoint a state referee to appraise the benefits to the property and report to the court. The court's judgment confirming or altering the assessment is final. The owner's appeal does not stay proceedings for collecting the assessment, but the appellant must be reimbursed for any overpayments made if his or her assessment is reduced as a result of the appeal.

Collection

The district boards must set the payment due date for the benefit assessments at least 30 days in advance by (1) publishing it in a newspaper with general circulation in the municipality and (2) mailing it to the last known address of the affected property owners.

BONDING

Bond Limits

Before they can issue bonds, the districts must enter into an interlocal agreement with the respective municipality on the sharing of incremental tax revenues collected on real property in the districts. The interlocal agreement must be ratified by the city or town council and have at least one public hearing. Once the district has done so, the bill allows the board, by resolution, to issue:

1. bonds (up to \$125 million for Port Eastside and up to \$190 million for Park City Landing) to finance district improvements secured by (a) the district's full faith and credit; (b) fees, revenues, and benefit assessments; or (c) a combination of the two;
2. bonds secured only by taxes, fees, revenues, benefit assessments, or charges the district imposes on the specific properties financed by this debt; and
3. refunding bonds.

While the bonds are outstanding, the district's powers may not be impaired in any way that would adversely affect bondholders' interests.

Bond Terms

The districts can use the bond proceeds to finance the improvements, create and maintain necessary reserves, and cover the issuance costs. They may use their revenues and full faith and credit to secure the bonds, whose terms cannot exceed 30 years.

The bill allows each district board to determine how it will issue and repay the bonds and specifies the kinds of terms and conditions it may include in its agreements with the bondholders. It declares the bonds negotiable instruments under the Uniform Commercial Code. The bill makes the bonds securities in which governments and private entities may invest.

Unless the law provides otherwise, the bonds are not considered debt of the state or the municipalities and only the districts are liable for

them.

TAX EXEMPTION

The bill exempts the districts' revenues and real and personal property used for public purposes from state and municipal taxes and benefit assessments. It also exempts the principal and interest on their bonds from taxes except state estate and gift, franchise, and excise taxes. But this exemption does not limit the state's and respective municipality's authority to levy taxes on the people and businesses living or operating in the district and their respective real or personal property.

INTERACTION WITH STATE AND LOCAL LAWS

The bill specifies that the districts' powers are in addition to those the law gives to statutory districts, but the bill's provisions control where they conflict with the statutes or any law or respective municipal ordinance or resolution. State and municipal laws, ordinances, and resolutions still govern property, residents, and businesses in the districts (except as described below, regarding the expedited approval process for Port Eastside District).

Each respective municipality may help the district finance its projects, but it is under no obligation to do so or pledge any funds to pay its debt service. If it chooses to provide financial or other assistance, it must do so under an interlocal agreement negotiated with the district.

The bill requires the portions of the bill outlining how the special taxing districts are created and operated to be liberally construed to effect their purposes.

MERGER WITH THE MUNICIPALITY

The bill allows each municipality's city or town council to merge the district into the municipality (1) if the district fails to issue bonds 10 years after the bill takes effect or (2) after the district's bonds are no longer outstanding. In either case, the district's property is conveyed to the municipality at the time of the merger.

TERMINATION

The requirements for terminating the districts are the same as those for statutory districts. The decision must be made at a district meeting, which the officers can call for this purpose by voting to terminate the district. The voters can also trigger the meeting if at least 10% of voters or 20 voters, whichever is less, sign a petition calling for a meeting on termination. Or, in lieu of the meeting, voters can petition for a referendum on termination, subject to the same requirements as those for referenda on whether to form a district. In either case, the district's officers must terminate the district if two-thirds of the voters at the meeting or in the referendum approve.

If the district's termination is approved, the district must still pay off its debt and transfer its remaining assets to the municipality if its council approves. Alternatively, the district may dissolve if the council agrees, in writing, to assume that debt.

The district officially terminates when either of these events occur and the officers complete their duties. At that point, the clerk must record a certificate of the termination vote in the municipality's land records and notify OPM about the termination.

STATE APPROVALS FOR PORT EASTSIDE DISTRICT IMPROVEMENTS (§ 2)

Applicable District Improvements

The bill's process applies to state administrative actions, permit issuances, and approvals ("approvals for district improvements") by state agency commissioners for any work connected to the Port Eastside District's "district improvements," as described above.

Additionally, administrative actions by a public entity (i.e. the state and any of its agencies) are generally subject to the bill's approval process if the district enters into a written agreement with the entity for this work (e.g., to get a government permit, license, or approval; acquire property; or build utility connections). But the process does not apply if federal law or an applicable agreement requires otherwise.

Approval Authority

Approvals for district improvements must be issued by (1) the commissioner with relevant jurisdiction over the matter, or (2) another state official designated by the commissioner. The bill prohibits any agency, commission, council, committee, panel, or other body, other than the commissioner, from having jurisdiction over these approvals for district improvements unless the commissioner with approval authority requires it. And it exempts these approvals from any notice requirements for tentative or final determinations or approvals, except those required by the bill itself.

Approval Process

To the extent each commissioner finds practicable, he or she must adopt a “master process” to consider multiple licenses, permits, approvals, and administrative actions. Approval applications are submitted directly to commissioners. Commissioners must hold any required hearing, legal notice of which must be published between five and 10 days before the hearing in a newspaper with general circulation in the municipality.

Unless they deny a license, permit, or approval (including a request for administrative action), commissioners must issue their approval or take the requested action within 10 business days after receiving an application, unless they must hold a hearing on it. If commissioners do not deny or grant conditional approval by the 10th business day after the hearing is held, approval is deemed to have been given on the next day.

The bill requires commissioners to weigh all competent material and substantial evidence presented by the applicant and the public when making decisions on these applications. Commissioners must issue written findings and determinations that address appropriate evidence, including the nature of any major adverse health and environmental effects of the improvements. They may reverse or modify an order or action at any time on their own initiative. In making such a reversal or modification, they must follow the same procedure they followed in

approving the application.

Satisfying State Building and Fire Permits and Inspections

For any work connected to district improvements that requires a permit or inspection by the state building inspector or state fire marshal, the district can instead have an engineer or other duly state-certified or -licensed professional certify the work. This certification satisfies these permit and inspection requirements if the work complies with any applicable state building and fire codes and safety regulations.

Records Disclosure

The bill makes all applications, supporting documentation, and other records submitted in connection with any application, together with records of related proceedings, public records. These must be made, kept, and disclosed in accordance with the state's freedom of information law.

Appeals

The bill allows any administrative action taken by a commissioner connected with the district improvements to be appealed to the Hartford Superior Court in accordance with the process for appeals to court under the Uniform Administrative Procedure Act (UAPA), with certain modifications that expedite the process. Under the bill:

1. appeals must be filed and copies must be served within 10 days after the commissioner's mailing of the order, decision, or action, rather than within 45 days as the UAPA generally requires;
2. the commissioner who made the decision must transmit the proceeding's record to court within 10 days, rather than 30 days, after the appeal is served; and
3. the court must render its decision within 21 days after the record is filed, unlike under the UAPA, which does not provide a deadline for the court.

The appeal must state the reasons on which it is based and does not

stay the improvements' development. As under the UAPA, the proceeding's records must separately state the agency's findings and conclusions. Under the bill, if more than one commissioner has jurisdiction over the matter, the commissioners must issue joint findings and conclusions. Additionally, the bill requires the commissioner who made the decision to appear as the respondent.

Under the bill, if the court finds material prejudice, it can sustain the appeal and render a judgment that modifies the commissioner's decision or orders the commissioner to take specific actions. Following these court actions, an applicant may file an amended application, and the commissioner may consider it for approval.

TRAFFIC LAW EXEMPTIONS

In addition to exempting district improvements from statutory state-approval processes, the bill exempts the same Port Eastside district improvements from laws:

1. requiring major traffic-generating developments to get a certificate of operation from the Office of the State Traffic Administration (OSTA);
2. authorizing OSTA and local traffic authorities to require traffic controls for access to and from specified parking areas or commercial establishments with an entrance or exit on or near a state or local road, as applicable;
3. establishing a 60-day timeframe for the Department of Transportation and OSTA to make a final determination on economic development project petitions, applications, or requests;
4. authorizing traffic authorities to make and enforce temporary regulations to cover emergencies and special conditions;
5. allowing anyone aggrieved by a traffic authority's order or regulation under the traffic control and highway safety laws to

appeal it;

6. establishing penalties for failing to comply with traffic control and safety orders and damaging or removing traffic control devices, signs, or lights;
7. requiring OSTA, if requested, to put up special warning signs near the residences of children who are deaf; and
8. allowing OSTA or a local traffic authority to designate locations on roads within their respective jurisdictions at which signs saying "State Law Requires Use of Signal Lights When Changing Lanes" may be erected.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Planning and Development Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 19 Nay 0 (03/21/2025)