



**Statement of
Danté Bartolomeo
Commissioner
Department of Labor
Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee
Bonding Subcommittee**

March 18, 2024

Good Afternoon Senator Moore, Representative Napoli, Senator Hwang, Representative Piscopo and members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee - Bonding Subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to share information regarding Governor Ned Lamont's proposed General Obligation FY 25 \$500,000 bond authorization for alterations, renovations, and improvements to buildings and grounds for the CT Department of Labor in **SB 10: An Act Authorizing and Adjusting Bonds of the State**. My name is Danté Bartolomeo and I am the Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Labor (CTDOL).

I am here today to address several questions posed by the Bonding sub-committee: 1) the goal of the program, 2) what stage of the project does the proposed authorization fund, 3) if there are any other funds that will support the program, and 4) the expected completion date for the program.

What is the goal of the program?

This is not a program but a capital improvement project at CTDOL's Central Office -200 Folly Brook Boulevard in Wethersfield. As background, this building was built in the early 1960's and the most recent major remodel was 30 years ago in the mid-1990's. Therefore, we are experiencing a steady increase in building and grounds repairs that are difficult to anticipate and not budgeted. CTDOL is looking for ways to help reduce our maintenance and utility cost in the short term. The proposed \$500,000 bond authorization will incorporate the following repairs and capital items:

- 1) **Exterior repairs:** Deferred maintenance caused storm drains to block up and created flooding issues. Pothole repairs are needed throughout the entire parking lot along with repairs to sidewalks and entryway stairs to ensure safety for employees and customers.



- 2) **Exterior Capital Improvements:** There is a need to replace the catch basins and the exterior pole lights, all of which were original to the building and have failed, therefore causing safety concerns.
- 3) **Mechanical Repairs:** The IT HVAC unit needs a compressor replaced, along with other related HVAC repairs. This is critical as the IT servers and other equipment must remain in a temperature regulated environment.
- 4) **Security:** Repairs are needed to exterior/interior doors, the closed-circuit television system, and related security equipment. Currently the closed-circuit security system is obsolete, failing, and new equipment is not compatible with the existing system. Due to deferred maintenance with exterior/interior doors, many repairs are needed to ensure code compliance.
- 5) **Building Envelope:** Window seals throughout the building are starting to fail causing water to leak into the building and some of the windowpanes to crack. Seven windowpanes needed to be replaced in 2023. The building roof requires repairs and maintenance, yet it has been out of warranty since early 2023. In addition, the front vestibule has signs of water infiltration.
- 6) **Interior Plumbing Capital/Repair:** Most water fountains throughout building do not work properly and will be replaced with energy efficient/bottle filling units. Damaged toilets and urinals will have automatic flushers installed accomplishing both the necessary repairs and added health benefits. A cracked pipe at the loading dock, which has been flooding in heavy rain for 10+years, will be replaced.
- 7) **Chiller replacement:** CTDOL had an electric chiller and a gas chiller. Both units failed last summer. The gas chiller could not be repaired because the parts are no longer available. The aging electric chiller was repaired and is expected to continue working a bit longer. But, due to supply chain issues at the time it went down and the size of the building, CTDOL incurred a \$160,000 expense to rent a temporary unit last summer.



What stage of the project does the proposed authorization fund? For example, is this design funding only, with a future authorization expected for construction costs, or is this the annual amount of an ongoing program?

The proposed authorization is for a new capital improvement project for above items. Once implemented, no additional costs for this project are anticipated.

Are there any other funds that will support the program?

The cost of these capital improvement projects exceeds currently available agency funds.

When is the expected completion date for the program?

All the alterations, renovations, and improvements to CTDOL buildings and grounds are anticipated to be completed in 12-18 months.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this statement and I am available to answer any questions that you might have.