

Motion to Discharge Comments

Thank you, Madame President,

We are asking that this be discharged as these proposals provided by the non-profits must be submitted to State DRS by July 1, 2021 so that the board can make its decision tonight in order to meet the state mandated deadline. I ask you and my colleagues to discharge this item tonight

Comments on The Main Item

Thank you, Madame President.

This program is a State of Connecticut Department of Revenue Services tax credit program for businesses. I repeat this is a State of Connecticut Department of Revenue Services tax credit program for businesses. For a third time, the neighborhood assistance act created by state statute created this product and program of the State Connecticut Department of Revenue Services as a tax credit program provided to all the municipalities in the State of Connecticut. Meaning the city of new haven takes its directions from the Department of Revenue services as it pertains to the eligibility of the program. The program of review tonight as the State has set it up, allows eligible non-profit agencies that provide a service to the community to solicit donations from businesses and the business receives a tax credit for such donation.

The City of New Haven simply has acted as the initial intake process between the State of Connecticut Department of Revenue Services and the local non-profits for over a decade. The city's administration reaches out to a list generated over the past 10 years, including a posting of the meeting on the city website, having city staff attend a community meeting, and providing copies provided to all alderpersons and department heads to get the word out about the program.

The agency and the project it applies, for, must be approved by the State of Connecticut Department of Revenue Services to receive donations from businesses. Again, the donations come from businesses, not the City and the State of Connecticut Department of Revenue Services is the agency that approves the agencies and projects. This program has no fiscal impact on the City of New Haven as we are not approving any funds, I repeat the City of New Haven and the Board of Alders do not approve any funds, meaning we have no funds to give any of these non-profits and programs. It is not our program, the city is part of the intake process. As stated, by the Department of Revenue Services the approver of who will access the tax credit program in the State of Connecticut Department of Revenue Services. If there are any forms of fraudulent activity as it pertains to the initial application the city administrator will flag it for the New Haven Board of Alders and the ultimately the Department of Revenue Services, but we were not presented with anything that would disqualify any of the eligible organizations being presented tonight, as spelled out by the state statute guidelines.

Through you Madame President and as the chair of the health and human services committee, I want to remind colleagues and members of the public that accepting the chair role means that I agreed to do the work or ensuring this aldermanic institution is upheld to the highest standard. I can truly state that tonight's item had a fair, open, transparent process. Most importantly, I am to remain impartial doing the work of the city and to ensure we are following the rules of the board of alders, local ordinances, and most importantly ensuring that we as a board do not override state statutes.

And let me note that this year or the year before that no one came forward to the public hearing to testify at the public hearing. In addition, all of the questions that were asked at the public hearing were consulted and discussed as a committee. The questions presented were done so in the most effective manner possible so that there was no misunderstanding that we were seeking the proper interpretation of sections of the statute. In addition, as the chair, I petitioned the president to retain the outside counsel of Attorney Steve Mednick, whose advice guides what we are doing today. Finally, I want to ensure that I will be sending yet another correspondence to the State to ask them to once again and to provide clear direction on the role of the local government as it relates to this program including the auditing and certification of the annual list and reports as the state statute as it is presently written is disjointed and left open for reckless interpretations.

Again, As previously mentioned these proposals provided by the non-profits must be submitted to State DRS by July 1, 2021, as the chair it is my job to provide the chance to this board to decide to review the list.