

LEGISLATION | CO-INTRODUCED LAST SESSION
(that still needs more support in order to pass)

House Bill 6303, An Act Concerning the Development of Ultra-High Speed Gigabit-Capable Broadband Infrastructure, Consumer Access to Affordable Broadband Services and Defining a Standard Wage for Broadband Workers

This legislation would:

- 1. Further develop ultra high-speed broadband internet infrastructure throughout the state to provide ultra high-speed broadband services.
- 2. Enable universal consumer access to affordable broadband services.
- 3. Define a standard wage for broadband workers and require municipally operated broadband companies, or any company contracted by the municipality, to pay employees such wage.

Senate Bill 410,
An Act Establishing Municipal Broadband PILOT Programs

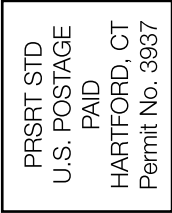
This legislation would amend Title 16 of the general statutes to establish municipal broadband pilot programs. These programs could range from providing funding sources to other incentives such as tax credits that would encourage communities to improve their high-speed broadband internet infrastructure for schools, public buildings and other transportation networks and roadways, much like we have done with solar energy. We also need to remove barriers that limit municipalities’ use of the Municipal Gain (which is the access to infrastructure needed along telephone lines) to promote access to broadband services for their residents, businesses, and municipal facilities.



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

JOSH ELLIOTT

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE

JOSH ELLIOTT

INVESTING IN CONNECTICUT’S INFORMATION
& TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

Hello Friends and Neighbors,

I firmly believe that if we want to be a successful state, we need to be forward-thinking. To attract businesses to Connecticut, we need exceptional infrastructure and a way to prove to business leaders that our quality of life is unparalleled. The way forward is by investing in blazing fast internet speed. You can call it gigabit, fiber-optic, or broadband – but the meaning is the same. Our internet speeds could be many times faster, cheaper and more consistent – but government needs to help this to happen. Big telecoms simply have no incentive to make this sort of investment. They have invested in outdated technologies, namely copper, and now they need to reap a return on their investment. Further, they invest deeply in lobbying and contributing to organizations such as the Democratic Governors Association, ensuring there are strong opponents in powerful positions who block building out the infrastructure of the future.

During the 2017 legislative session, I introduced House Bill 6303 which would have further developed ultra-high speed, gigabit capable broadband infrastructure, enabled universal consumer access to affordable broadband services. I also co-sponsored Senate Bill 410 which would have funded a pilot program to build out this infrastructure. But there was not yet enough support at the state level yet to pass this type of legislation.

This session, I have also co-sponsored Senate Bill 2 An Concerning Internet Service Providers and Net Neutrality Principles in order to protect and free, open and fair access to the internet, more details of which are included in this newsletter

To help turn these initiatives into a reality, it is vital to hear from you. Please let me know if you would like to learn more or become involved in supporting these initiatives.

Sincerely,

STATE REPRESENTATIVE JOSH ELLIOTT

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NET NEUTRALITY

Net neutrality is a concept that aims to ensure equal access to the internet for consumers, by barring internet providers from limiting content with tiered pricing for service and speed.

As many of you know, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) recently made a decision to gut net neutrality rules that had protected against companies charging different prices for different speeds and content. This is a very dangerous rollback of consumer protections. To make sure we protect Connecticut consumers, I have co-sponsored Senate Bill 2, An Act Concerning Internet Service Providers and Net Neutrality Principles.

During the Obama administration, the FCC voted to adopt strong, open internet rules to ensure that consumers have access to an internet that is fair, open, and equally accessible to all. Preserving open internet is good for Connecticut's businesses, startups, students and consumers. We want to make sure these rules are protected.

Specifically, the bill would require the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) to apply net neutrality principles to internet service providers. The legislation would also prohibit internet service providers in Connecticut from slowing down consumer internet speeds, blocking certain websites or imposing prioritization pricing. These principles would be enforced through civil penalties.

This bill has the support of those such as Elin Katz, the state's consumer counsel, who agrees that consumers don't want to pay higher fees for certain websites or higher speeds to cut to the front of the line through tiered pricing.

Creating faster internet speeds and protecting a free, open and fair internet is crucial to our economy in having the infrastructure to attract businesses and high tech jobs quality jobs to our state. Recently Hartford was named the fourth best city in the country for tech jobs by the Brookings Institution. We need to continue to build on that for other communities in our state including Hamden and the greater New Haven area. Again if you would like to learn more or become more involved in supporting this legislation please feel free to contact my office.

