To: **Members of the House**

From: **Karen Horn, Director Public Policy & Advocacy**

Re: **H. 50, Extending the Sunset Deadline for Public Service Board Jurisdiction over Siting Telecommunications Facilities**

Date: **Monday, February 27, 2017**

Thank you for your interest in H. 50, the bill addressing the siting of telecommunications facilities.

I am writing to urge you to vote in favor of the amendment to H. 50 that was approved by the House Energy and Technology Committee on Friday and is expected to appear in the House Calendar this Wednesday, March 1.

The members of your House Energy and Technology Committee (PSB) heard the on-going concerns of local officials regarding the Public Service Board process for approving applications to site telecommunications facilities. The amendment to H. 50 would extend the sunset on PSB authority to hear applications for siting telecommunications facilities to July 1, 2020. It would also require an applicant for a telecommunicationsCertificate of Public Good to include a statement itemizing rights and opportunities to participate in the process in the notice of application sent to municipal legislative bodies and planning commissions. The notice would also include information about where to find the Public Service Department guide to the 248a Process for siting telecommunications facilities.

By extending the current sunset of PSB jurisdiction, the legislature would be assuring local officials of its commitment to re-evaluate the law ahead of July 1, 2020 and assess PSB effectiveness in implementing the law as technology evolves, telecommunications networks are built out, and as a new telecommunications plan is adopted in 2017. There will also be a more complete PSB experience with implementing new statutory requirements to provide substantial deference to municipal determinations or show good cause for not providing that deference – sections of law that only took effect last May.

We thank the committee for both its attention to the concerns of local officials and its recognition of the effort those local volunteers put into municipal plans.

Sponsor of:

VLCT Employment Resource and Benefits Trust, Inc.

VLCT Municipal Assistance Center

VLCT Property and Casualty Intermunicipal Fund, Inc.