



CONNECTICUT HB 7060 SIGNED INTO LAW

Center for the Study of Economics CEO Joshua Vincent in a 6-16-15 email, "Land value tax bill becomes law in Connecticut", shared the good news that Governor Malloy signed HB 7060 into law. The bill will extend the time for cities to fill out the required paperwork for the land value tax pilot program. Joshua expresses gratitude to the many officials of the municipal and state level who recognized the need, including Representative Aundre Bumgardner (who introduced the original bill), Mayor Finch of Bridgeport, Representative Steve Stofstrom, and Majority Leader Senator Martin Looney who placed LVT extension into his SB 1 omnibus bill.

(http://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/cgabillstatus/cgabillstatus.asp?selBillType=Bill&bill_num=HB07060&which_year=2015)

Joshua Vincent says, "Connecticut more than ever needs new choices for municipal finance. Connecticut has increased total taxes in the rest of the budget, and is furthering an unsustainable fiscal infrastructure. Frankly, Connecticut is getting deeper in trouble, which does mean increased opportunities for innovative and even radical solutions to be taken seriously through empirical research, ongoing outreach and education so the ideas of Henry George may spend and enter the consciousness of our elected officials. Rest assured CSE will be working closely and intensely with Bridgeport and other cities to wrap up their application process as soon as possible. Without your ongoing support, CSE would not be able to do this work."

A Summary of HB 7060 (as amended by House "A") is at <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2015/BA/2015HB-07060-R01-BA.htm>. It is titled An Act Concerning the Failure to File for Certain Tax Exemptions, The Extension of Certain Tax Credits and Development Programs, and Exemptions from Certain Financial Assistance and Admissions Tax Requirements.

Among the several items listed in the Summary is
§ 7 — LAND VALUE TAXATION PILOT PROGRAM.
"The bill gives municipalities more time to comply with one of the procedural requirements for participating in the Land Value Taxation Pilot Program, under which they can tax land at a higher rate than buildings instead of taxing both at the same rate.

"Municipalities that want to impose the higher land tax may do so only by participating in the pilot program. They must apply to the Office of Policy and Management, which may accept up to three municipalities into the program. These municipalities must prepare plans for for assessing the tax and

also submit the approved plans to the Commerce; Planning and Development; and Finance, Revenue and Bonding committees. The bill extends, from December 31, 2014 to December 31, 2015, the deadline for submitting the plans to these committees.

"The bill allows municipalities to participate in the pilot program only once, making those selected for the program ineligible for subsequent selection. By law, a participating municipality may limit the land value tax to areas designated in its plan for implementing this tax. Under the bill, it cannot reapply to the program for designating other areas."

On 4-30-15 the bill had passed the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee on a 38-9 vote

(Josh Vincent may be emailed at joshua@urbantools.org)

A SHOWING OF "REAL ESTATE 4 RANSOM" AT ST. JOAN OF ARC CATHOLIC CHURCH by Rich Nymoen, St. Paul, MN

In the fall of 2014, I met with Ann Mongoven who is co-chair of the Ecospirits group of my church, St. Joan of Arc, in Minneapolis, to tell her about the efforts of our Common Ground chapter. Afterward, I sent her the link to the "Real Estate 4 Ransom" film as way of further introducing her to "Earthsharing" ideas. When in early January, 2015, I asked Mongoven to partner with our chapter on our projects, she suggested I submit a proposal to the Ecospirits group for a showing of "Real Estate 4 Ransom" with a discussion to follow. My proposal was accepted and the showing took place on April 27, 2015 to an audience of twenty-five people. I introduced the film by explaining it was produced by a Georgist organization from Australia. Then I explained that the term Georgist is a reference to Henry George, a reformer in the late 1800s who wrote a world-wide best-selling book called "Progress and Poverty" in which he argued that if land and natural resources were privately held or used, it should be on a rental basis from the community. But I further explained that he proposed that the rent need not be lease payment but could be paid in the form of a tax and that this led to the Single Tax movement that was influential up until the 1930s, which is surprising because today hardly anyone has heard of it.

I then told the group that there is an interesting connection between this reform and the Catholic Church because, though Henry George was not Catholic, he married a Catholic and after "Progress and Poverty" came out he was hired by the Irish World newspaper (continued on page 15