



Creating Great Communities For All

Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association

Testimony regarding

**Proposed Bill No. 6610– AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROVISION OF OUTDOOR FOOD
AND BEVERAGE SERVICE BY RESTAURANTS**

CCAPA supports the intent of the overall changes of **CGS §19a-31(i) to add language that** permanently legalizes some of the changes to restaurant operations that allowed overflow outdoor dining as part of the Governor's emergency orders during the COVID pandemic.

The increased outdoor dining areas during the past year have been widely embraced by both planners and the general public, and is a best planning practice that enlivens our community's commercial corridors and supports our local small businesses. **CCAPA supports Sec. 1(b) that adds new language** lessening the review threshold for approval as an administrative site plan review instead of a potential public hearing.. However, **CCAPA cautions** that, without knowing whether post-COVID driving patterns will return to previous pre-COVID levels, removing on-site parking spaces to accommodate outdoor dining as suggested in **Section (c)(1)(B) may result in potential adverse impacts**, depending on specific commercial corridor physical characteristics such as on-street parking supply, walkability or transit availability. Removing on-site parking spaces is best addressed within the local site plan approval suggested in lieu of state-wide regulation.

WHO WE ARE

The Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association (CCAPA) has over 420 members who are governmental and consulting planners, land use attorneys, citizen planners, and other professionals engaged in planning and managing land use, economic development, housing, transportation, and conservation for local, regional, and State governments, private businesses and other entities. CCAPA has long been committed to assisting the legislature and State agencies with developing and furthering responsible growth management principles. The APA is an independent, not-for-profit, national educational organization that provides leadership in the development of vital communities.

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