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Bristol and New Britain Leaders Encourage Small Businesses and Nonprofits to Learn More About Connecticut CARES Small Business Grants and How to Apply

(BRISTOL, CT: October 30, 2020) – Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu and Mayor Erin Stewart are encouraging Bristol and New Britain businesses struggling during the pandemic to learn about the eligibility requirements and how to apply for one-time \$5,000 grants from the State of Connecticut. The State of Connecticut has announced that businesses and nonprofits with fewer than 20 employees or a 2019 payroll of under \$1.5 million, among other eligibility criteria, will be eligible for one-time \$5,000 grants under the new CARES Small Business Grant Program.

The new Connecticut CARES Small Business Grant Program is designed to help qualifying small businesses and nonprofits that have been impacted negatively by the COVID-19 pandemic and related downturn. The Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) will administer the grants, which can be used for expenses including payroll, rent, utilities, inventory, machinery or equipment purchases, or the costs of compliance with State pandemic reopening guidelines.

“With applications being accepted starting the week of November 9, we are encouraging local businesses and nonprofits in Bristol to determine their eligibility and be ready to apply since funds will go fast,” stated Bristol Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu.

“The City of New Britain stands ready to assist our small business community in any way that we can, those that are in need of assistance should contact our Economic Development Office,” said New Britain Mayor Erin Stewart.

The grants will be paid for with \$50 million from the state’s Coronavirus Relief Fund, which utilizes federal CARES Act funding. The governor is directing the DECD to commit half of the funds to small businesses and nonprofits that are located in towns and cities designated as

distressed municipalities. Updated annually, the Distressed Municipalities list identifies the State's most fiscally and economically distressed municipalities and are used by state agencies to target funds for needs which may include housing, insurance, open space, brownfield remediation and economic development programs, among others. Both Bristol and New Britain are on the 2020 list.

“As the Central Connecticut Chambers of Commerce President representing over 1600 members, I encourage all businesses and nonprofits to participate in any and all of the informational webinars to learn more about the Connecticut CARES Small Business Grant Program prior to beginning the application process,” stated Cindy Bombard, Central Connecticut Chambers of Commerce President & CEO.

A listing of the webinars and how to register along with frequently asked questions about the grant program can be found on the DECD's web portal at:

<https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/Coronavirus-Business-Recovery/CT-CARES-Small-Business-Grant-Program>.

Online applications are scheduled to be accepted beginning the week of November 9, with all funds distributed by December 30. Visit the State of Connecticut business portal for more information and eligibility requirements: <https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/Coronavirus-Business-Recovery/CT-CARES-Small-Business-Grant-Program>

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