



Testimony of  
**Ron McLellan, President**  
**Connecticut Employees Union Independent (CEUI), SEIU Local 511**  
Government Administration and Elections & Transportation Committees  
Public Hearing – March 3, 2008

**H. B. No. 5041 AN ACT CONCERNING THE CREATION OF  
A DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, AVIATION AND  
PORTS  
AND A DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS**

RON McLELLAN  
President

MICHAEL GRIFFIN  
Vice President

LESLIE MADDOCKS  
Secretary-Treasurer

Good afternoon Senator DeFronzo, Representative Guerrero, Senator Slossberg, Representative Caruso and members of the Transportation and Government Administration and Elections Committees. My name is Ron McLellan and I am the president of the Connecticut Employees Union Independent, SEIU Local 511, which represents almost six thousand active and retired state employees, including more than 1,500 of whom work at the Department of Transportation (DOT). These employees are highway maintainers and other service and maintenance workers who make up nearly 50% of the agency's entire workforce.

In response to the contracting disaster that unfolded on I-84 in 2006 and 2007, the Governor's Commission on the Reorganization of the DOT began with a bold mission to create a new DOT that was more transparent and accountable to Connecticut taxpayers.

In an effort to diagnose and cure the problems that ail DOT, the Commission solicited the input of many, including the general public, but failed to fully engage DOT employees. Workers were asked to take part in a written survey, but it was done hastily and without the involvement of union representatives. As a result, many employees were fearful and apprehensive about providing information that accurately reflected their true thoughts and sentiments.

The 3,200 employees at the DOT should have a voice in reforming their agency. It is their hard work and commitment that makes the Department function on a daily basis. They undoubtedly have suggestions about how to best implement effective solutions to the problems they face every day. As the representative of the NP-2 bargaining unit workers at DOT, CEUI would welcome an opportunity to participate in a process that would develop workable solutions to fix DOT.



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We are confident that inadequate staffing, inconsistent leadership and systemic under funding are the root causes of the challenges facing DOT today. By splitting the Department into two agencies the Governor has not addressed the issues that precipitated the need for the Commission in the first place. This proposal needs more thought and consideration. The last thing we want to do is execute another failed policy at DOT.

If the Administration believes in providing quality transportation services, it must provide strong leadership, adequate resources and sufficient staffing to the DOT. CEUI would welcome an opportunity to be involved in a process that would successfully address these issues.

Thank you and I would be happy to answer questions you might have.