



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Office of the
Commissioner

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Public Hearing – March 4, 2009 Transportation Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Joseph F. Marie Department of Transportation

S.B. 204 - An Act Concerning Reduced Bus Fares for the Connecticut Transit System.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) offers the following comments on S.B. 204, AAC Reduced Bus Fares for the Connecticut Transit System.

DOT is supportive of any fare program that encourages transit usage. The Department currently offers a *U-Pass* program with Capital Community College, Trinity College, and the University of New Haven. The *U-Pass* program allows any registered student to receive a transit pass good for free travel on any CTTransit bus for the semester. A rate is negotiated between CTTransit and the school based upon forecasted ridership. The amount (currently averaging about \$25 per registering student) is added to every student activity fee. All students then receive free CTTransit bus transportation for the semester with no cash outlay for any trip taken. The college or post secondary school collects and transfers the fees to the transit provider. The *U-Pass* program is provided with no additional cost to the state transportation appropriation.

If a reduced fare were to be extended to all college, post secondary and vocational students, the transit system would lose revenue equal to the amount of the discount, and would require additional offsetting appropriations. A system-wide fare discount, with no offsetting revenue source such as is the case with *U-Pass*, would have fiscal impacts. The Department recommends pursuing the *U-Pass* as an option, which would offer very deep discounts to the students with minimal fiscal impact to the transit system or state budget.

For further information or questions, please contact Pam Sucato, Legislative Program Manager for the Department of Transportation, at (860) 594-3013.