

Opening Statement – Connor Murphy, MNR Rail Commuter Counsel

Good Afternoon Senator Looney, Representative Janowski and members of the committee. My name is Connor Murphy and I am pleased to appear before you as Representative Frey's nominee for the Metro North Rail Commuter Council.

I have lived in Connecticut for a total of 30 years and have lived in Ridgefield with my wife and family for the past 7 years. I have commuted to Manhattan on the Metro North Rail Road from various towns in Connecticut for the past 11 years. When I first began commuting, I was a practicing litigator in Manhattan working primarily in aviation law with a focus on major aircraft disasters. As part of my aviation practice, I handled many cases incident to public transportation, including that in and around airports and other facilities operated by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. For the past five years, I have worked for a specialized consulting firm which focuses on regulated industries, including transportation, construction and energy. We have conducted numerous feasibility studies and forensic financial reviews as well as having served as expert witnesses in related litigations. Accordingly, I believe my experience with public transportation from both a legal and regulatory perspective make me well-qualified to serve on the Rail Council.

I have attended council meetings for the past 9 months and have been able to observe and participate in the various discussions about commuting along the Metro North corridor. The current economic environment coupled with the fluctuations in the price of gasoline over the past nine months has exposed the many challenges faced by commuters, the CT Department of Transportation and Metro North Railroad. I believe it is the role of the council to serve as a line of communication to draw attention and accountability to these issues on behalf of commuters and tax payers to the various government entities as well as the railroad itself. As a commuter out of the Wilton station along the Danbury branch of the Metro North Railroad, I am able to fill an important role on the council that has been empty for some time. The Danbury branch faces unique challenges that have received some attention but little action for some time. As part of the Council, it will be my goal to help bring rail travel along the Danbury branch up to modern day standards.

Thank you.