



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Office of the
Commissioner

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Public Hearing – February 24, 2009 Transportation Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Joseph F. Marie Department of Transportation

H.B. 5646 – An Act Requiring the State of Connecticut to Take Necessary Steps to Establish the New England, New York and New Jersey Interstate Passenger Rail Commission.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) offers the following comments on H.B. 5646, to establish a New England, New York and New Jersey Interstate Passenger Rail Commission.

Regional collaboration has been a regular part of the Department's efforts to expand and promote interregional transportation, including regional train service. DOT actively works with regional partners such as the Council of Northeast Governors (CONEG), the Northeast Association of State Transportation Officials (NASTO), the New England Council, the I-95 Corridor Coalition, and the Northeast Corridor Advisory Commission to discuss, again, all aspects of regional transportation issues, including regional train service. In addition, DOT continually coordinates with neighboring states to facilitate and implement improvements such as maintenance activities, safety improvements and other transportation projects.

Some specific examples - the Department is working with MTA/Metro-North Railroad, New Jersey Transit and Amtrak to operate trains between New Haven, Connecticut and the Meadowlands Complex in New Jersey on Sundays as a regional service pilot program beginning in late summer 2009. The Department is also in the process of planning the New Haven, Hartford and Springfield, Massachusetts rail service, working with various stakeholders including representative from the State of Massachusetts. The Department also continues to work with Amtrak for extension of Shore Line East rail service to New London and has periodic meetings with representatives from the Rhode Island Department of Transportation regarding their rail service plans and the coordination with current rail service in Connecticut and Massachusetts.

The Department believes the existing discussions and relationships with regional partners currently underway provide the vehicle to improve and coordinate the expansion of interstate rail service in the region as well as other transportation initiatives.

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