

TO: Senator Donald DeFronzo, Transportation Committee Chair,
Representative Tony Guerrero, Transportation Committee Chair,
Members of the Transportation Committee.

FROM: Peter Sielman, Chairman of the Route 11 Greenway Authority Commission

DATE: March 11, 2009 Transportation Committee Public Hearing

RE: *Testimony in Support of HB 6076AN ACT CONCERNING THE PURCHASE OF LAND OPTIONS BY THE ROUTE 11 GREENWAY AUTHORITY COMMISSION*

Senator DeFronzo, Representative Guerrero, Members of the Transportation Committee, for the record my name is Peter Sielman and I am submitting testimony in support of proposed bill No. 6076 which would provide the Route 11 Greenway Authority Commission with the ability to purchase land options.

The Route 11 Greenway Authority Commission was created by the Legislature to acquire and manage land for the Route 11 Greenway. The Route 11 Greenway, when coupled with the completion of Route 11, will allow the solution of a major transportation problem in Connecticut while simultaneously protecting the environment.

Right now the funds available for the purchase of property by the Route 11 Greenway Authority Commission are very limited because the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requires the completion of an environmental study for a bike and pedestrian path prior to the release of the Federal earmarked funds.

The environmental study will have to be based on an estimate by the Route 11 Greenway Authority Commission as to which properties surrounding Route 11 will be available for purchase from willing sellers.

With the ability to secure options on parcels, the Route 11 Greenway Authority Commission will be able to:

1. Have a more certain knowledge of which parcels will be available from willing sellers.
2. Will be able to stretch the currently available funds over more parcels until the FHWA approval is secured.

Since land prices are currently depressed, the ability to secure options will enable the Route 11 Greenway Authority Commission to lock in favorable prices.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter F. Sielman: Chairman, Route 11 Greenway Authority Commission