



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

2800 BERLIN TURNPIKE, P.O. BOX 317546
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06131-7546



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. 1052 – An Act Concerning Replacement of the Broad Street Bridge over the Amtrak Railroad in Hartford.

(Department of Transportation proposal)

CGS 13b-251. "Overhead clearances for railroad tracks. Approval by legislature", requires replacement structures over non-electrified railroad tracks to provide a minimum vertical clearance of 20'-6". S.B. 1052 would allow the Commissioner of Transportation to replace a bridge over a railroad with a new bridge that provides an overhead clearance that is less than the required minimum 20'-6", but will equal or exceed the existing overhead clearance to facilitate the New Britain – Hartford busway project.

As part of the development of a dedicated busway between the cities of New Britain and Hartford, it is necessary to reconstruct the bridge that carries Broad Street (Bridge No. 03629) over the corridor that will accommodate the busway and the relocated railroad tracks. This reconstruction is required to modify the layout of the bridge substructure units to provide the necessary horizontal clearance for the proposed two lane busway, the two track railroad mainline and the track siding for the abutting property. The Preliminary Design Documents developed to date reflect this bridge reconstruction with a replacement structure that maintains the existing profile for Broad Street and also maintains the current minimum vertical clearance over the railroad of approximately 19'-1". The new bridge will provide a minimum vertical clearance of 19'-4".

CGS 13b-251 further requires any legislative exemption from this minimum clearance be accompanied by documentation from the Department of Transportation assessing the impacts and cost of achieving the minimum clearance. DOT has provided documentation to the Transportation Committee that determines, as part of the design phase, that it is not desirable to achieve an even greater clearance on this bridge because of geometric and economic constraints.

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