



Written Testimony of Gloria Mills, Executive Director
Submitted to the Appropriations Committee
Re: Governor's Midterm Budget Adjustment (HB 5018)
February 16, 2010

On behalf of the Connecticut Association for Community Transportation, I thank you Senator Harp, Representative Geragosian, and members of the Appropriations Committee for the opportunity to submit written testimony regarding HB 5018.

The Governor's Midterm Budget Adjustment recommends funding in FY 2011 for the Department of Transportation in Bus Operations, the ADA Para Transit Program, and Non-ADA Dial-A-Ride Program at the same levels as appropriated by the Connecticut General Assembly. This is a step in the right direction for Connecticut residents who demonstrate every day that riding the bus to work and other destinations makes sense for their pocketbook, the air they breathe and the state's economy.

However, CACT opposes the Governor's recommendation to suspend \$3,155,532 in funding to the Department of Social Services for the Transportation Employment Independence Program (TEIP) in FY 2011 because it will result in sizable cuts in bus service that the public uses. Examples of the bus service that will be affected by the loss of TEIP funds includes CTTRANSIT Saturday night service, Sunday morning service, and Sunday evening service in Hartford, all CTTRANSIT services in New Britain that run during the hours of 6 p.m. to midnight, and the base level of service on the Coastal Link. The Coastal Link provides commuters a seamless and affordable bus ride from Milford to Norwalk and reduces congestion on I-95 (transit districts in Norwalk and Bridgeport receive DSS money to subsidize that service).

The TEIP funds a variety of programs and services managed by the five regional job access partnerships in the state. The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CDOT) manages a portion of Connecticut's Job Access Program, providing bus service that connects people to job centers.

The Job Access Program was established to enhance transportation services to provide access to jobs for people transitioning from welfare to work. Using an array of transit options job seekers and workers are able to reach workplaces and daycare previously inaccessible due to geographical limits or the limited hours of service of pre-existing public transportation.

In FY 2009, the Department Of Transportation's portion of the program was about \$6.7 million: \$3.1 million came from the CDOT Bus Operations budget; \$2.1 million from FTA grants; and about \$1.5 million from the Department of Social Services. The impact to Connecticut in FFY 2011 of the proposed merger of the JARC line item into a "livable communities program" in the federal budget is unknown at this time.

In FY 2011, the Connecticut Department of Transportation's budget does not include the additional funds needed to maintain the bus service that is funded by the Transportation Employment Independence Program (TEIP). If the Governor's recommendation to suspend funding to TEIP succeeds, it will negatively impact the mobility of many Connecticut's residents and the economy of the state, because you can't work if you can't get there.

CACT urges you to restore the TEIP funds (\$3,155,532) in FY 2011 to Department of Social Services. Thank you for your support of public transportation in Connecticut.