

Testimony of Cromwell First Selectman, John M. Flanders:

Good morning Chairmen Maynard, Guerrero, and members of the Committee

I am sorry that I am not able to join you in person this morning, but am very grateful for your attention and consideration of this important matter. I would like to express my strong support for Proposed Bill 768 Concerning Exit 19 South on Route 9 in Cromwell.

Any of you who have tried to use this exit on a late weekday afternoon do not need to be told of the tremendous need for improvement at this interchange. Exit 19 not only serves as one of the primary means of access for Cromwell residents returning home from work, it is a major access point for large portions of the City of Middletown, as well as the rapidly growing commercial areas along Route 3 in Cromwell and Rocky Hill. Unfortunately the current configuration with three traffic lights and major state and local roads fanning out in four directions means this exit is grossly congested both from over use and an unworkable configuration.

As a result it is not uncommon for traffic to back up along Route 9 for over a mile up to the I-91 interchange. This presents a clear danger to the residents of Cromwell and Middletown, as well as those who wish to use our commercial district for shopping. As bad, from a community development perspective, is the fact that commercial traffic is substantially inhibited from using the exit to reach the Route 3 commercial district. This area is a significant area for both Cromwell and Rocky Hill, and the State Department of Transportation's concern is easily seen in the Route 3 traffic study currently underway. A further exacerbation is likely to result from the major reconstruction beginning this spring on the Arrigoni Bridge, barely a mile south of this exit

One or more plans for an approach to solve this problem have been proposed, and I strongly encourage the Committee and the DoT staff to review these thoroughly. I also encourage all parties to use the resources provided by this bill to comprehensively review the traffic patterns in this area to determine if an even better solution may be feasible.

I want to close by expressing my sincere thanks to Senator Doyle for proposing this measure and to the Cromwell citizens who have worked so hard to bring the problem and a proposed solution to your attention. I would be more than happy to provide further information, answer questions from Committee member or staff, and to authorize the cooperation of Town staff to assist in the exploration of a solution to this serious problem.