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Proposed S.B. 802, An Act Concerning The Construction of an Exit Ramp on Route 8 at Exit 14
Senator Kevin Kelly
February 23, 2011

Good Morning Chairmen Maynard and Guerrera, Ranking Members Boucher and Scribner. I am State Senator Kevin Kelly, and I represent Shelton, Stratford, Monroe, and Seymour. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify in support of *Proposed S.B. 802. An Act Concerning The Construction of an Exit Ramp on Route 8 at Exit 14.*

First, I want to clarify the intent of this bill. The title is somewhat misleading, as an exit 14 ramp already exists. What I am proposing is an *entrance* ramp onto Route 8 at the same location in Shelton so that local traffic can gain access from downtown.

Downtown Shelton has been the center of various revitalization projects over the past several years, with new residential and commercial construction starting in old abandoned factories. The downtown area is a prime example of the transformation of an old factory town to a vibrant 21st century community.

However, with the increasing development in downtown Shelton comes the need to accommodate increased traffic on Howe Avenue and upper Bridgeport Avenue. Many people are seeking to access to Route 8, and they should be able to access it directly from downtown rather than having to travel down Bridgeport Avenue to the exit 13 entrance ramp. Additionally, Route 8 connects with the Merritt Parkway and I-95—major thoroughfares used by Shelton residents traveling to work in lower Fairfield County.

In addition to the inconvenience, the current structure is causing increased traffic problems, as residents are traveling on already busy local roads to access Route 8. Construction of a ramp onto Route 8 at exit 14 would ensure that downtown's redevelopment continues its strong, positive path and provide the infrastructure to support the revitalized downtown in the decade to come.

Again, thank you for hearing my testimony. I urge the committee to give serious consideration to this legislation, and I would be happy to answer any questions members may have.