

SUBMITTED BY John Herman, Development Consultant proposing to speak for John Ciaffaglione, a property owner with land adjacent to the busway.

Regarding Proposed Bill 800

Dear Legislators and residents of CT:

The busway is a very modern concept conceived to accomplish a goal, like the Brooklyn Bridge was, and the Space Shuttle was. There was a lot of argument for and against these projects. Questions naturally emerge when any modern concept is proposed, others opinions are presented with alternative motives or political goals.

- 1) The busway project has had 10 years of scrutiny, 10 years of approvals and 10 years of planning at a cost of 60 million dollars. I don't trust everything I hear, but the professionals in the state and elsewhere tell us it will improve the functionality of transportation in the region. There is an argument to be made that they may not know what they are talking about.
- 2) From this point forward, the federal government is primarily buying this project for the state. The federal budget released this week funds the initial construction work. The busway is one of the few *shovel ready* projects in America that can start creating jobs this spring. Connecticut is in the right place at the right time on this. So we now have something concrete: a professional forecast of benefits, and federal money given to us to make it happen, now.

Option A: We accept our good luck. We pay 1/5 of the cost of the busway to own 100% of the busway and we receive the resultant temporary economic boost from an estimated 1,000 jobs over an estimated 2 year construction period. We also accept the long-term economic boost promised by enhanced transportation functionality. There will also be future real estate development along the busway corridor.

Option B: Pay \$50 million back to Washington, turn away another \$350 million and permanently turn away the money, jobs and busway transportation system.

Conclusion: The federal government is giving us this gift. Maybe we need to accept it, and regard it as a rare silver lining during our difficult economic times.

There is talk of other projects "instead" of the busway, but there is no reality to it. If the money from Washington is turned away, it is gone forever. Some other state will gladly accept it. The alternatives are fantasies. The Route 72 transportation project connecting Plainville to central Bristol, commenced in the 1950's and it took 50 – 60 years for things to finally materialize. The busway has the potential to offer Connecticut immediate economic benefit, and provide a new corridor which could result in additional longer term economic development.

My vote...Let's accept this gift of money, jobs, a cutting edge transportation system and the resultant opportunities that it may provide today.

Respectfully submitted, John Herman