



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Office of the
Commissioner

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Public Hearing – March 2, 2012
Government Administration and Elections Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner James Redeker
Department of Transportation

Governor's H.B. 5027 - An Act Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations Concerning the Elimination, Consolidation and Modification of Various Boards and Commissions.

The Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) supports Governor's H.B. 5027, AA Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations Concerning the Elimination, Consolidation and Modification of Various Boards and Commissions.

Connecticut Public Transportation Commission (CPTC) - 13b-11a

Established in 1975, the CPTC's mission was to "...advise and assist the commissioner, the Governor and the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to transportation in the performance of their functions and duties relating to the planning, development and maintenance of adequate rail, bus and motor carrier facilities and rail, bus and other public transportation services including the adequacy of such services for elderly and disabled users in the state and any other matters affecting the quality of public transportation facilities and services in the state". ConnDOT is completely committed and responsible for performing these responsibilities and holds the input of our riders and stakeholders as one of its highest priorities. In partnership with our regional councils of government, there are extensive, existing channels for providing transit policy, planning, public participation, and reporting functions necessary to deliver a multimodal transit system.

In addition, the Connecticut Association for Community Transportation (CACT) provides public forums for statewide discussions on public transportation and extremely effective advocacy at the local, state and federal level for public transportation systems and public transportation customers. CACT not only coordinates their efforts with government officials, but brings together organizations and individuals with like-minded goals and initiatives in furtherance of improved and increased public transportation.

The CPTC engages in annual public hearings that invite public transportation stakeholders to provide input to the commission as they develop recommendations for the Department. The hearings have been sparsely attended, and do not reflect a comprehensive outreach to all stakeholders and users of public transportation. In addition, it is unusual that the CPTC identifies issues that are not already appreciated by the Department. For example, the most recent CPTC identifies the need for Waterbury evening bus service. The Department was keenly aware of the need for that service and had been assessing options for funding and delivering that service for a number of years in close coordination with

Sen. Joan Hartley and the Waterbury delegation. After many years of inadequate funding for the Waterbury night service, the Department initiated a creative funding solution in partnership with Naugatuck Valley Community College and other stakeholders that resulted in highly successful night bus service in Waterbury.

The Department appreciates the individual contributions of all the CPTC commissioners. Each person devotes significant personal time to attending meetings and preparing an annual report. Their dedication is to be commended. However, it is not clear that there is significant added value from the CPTC to the existing mechanisms for developing public transportation policies and programs or to influencing Department priorities or budgets for public transportation.

At present, one ConnDOT Transportation Planner is assigned full-time to the CPTC at a salary level of approximately \$85,400. The CPTC budget is approximately \$12,900/year and is 100% funded from the State Transportation Fund (STF).

Southwest Corridor Action Council (13b-16b)

The Southwest Corridor Action Council is no longer active having last met in 1998.

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