

TESTIMONY In Support of HB 5127

Transportation Comm. Public Hearing
Wednesday February 13, 2013

**JIM CAMERON / Chairman
CT Metro-North Rail Commuter Council**



My name is Jim Cameron. I reside in Darien and serve as Chairman of the CT Metro-North Rail Commuter Council.

The Council would like to thank State Rep Gail Lavielle for introducing this bill on behalf of the 115,000 daily riders of Metro-North in Connecticut. It will help solve a serious problem.

THE PROBLEM:

Metro-North often cancels rail service, especially on the branch lines, due to weather conditions. But alternative bus service is not always provided. After tropical storm Irene, there was no service on the Danbury branch for 4 days. After Sandy, there was no service for 8 days. After the recent blizzard, no trains or buses on the Waterbury branch. But ticket holders on that line were *denied refunds*.

NO REFUNDS !:

One-way tickets are valid for 60 days and can be used anytime after a shutdown. But weekly and monthly tickets are only valid for the specific dates shown on the ticket.

If commuters buy a weekly ticket and no service is provided, we believe they deserve credit in the form of a new ticket or extended validity.

EXTEND THE TICKETS' VALIDITY:

HB 5127 would require Metro-North to extend the validity of weekly / monthly tickets if service is not provided for 48 or more hours. This is only fair.

A ticket should get you a ride. No trains? Give commuters a new ticket.

The Connecticut Metro-North Rail Commuter Council

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