



## State of Connecticut

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#### Testimony in Support of HB 5127

#### An Act Concerning the Extension of the Validity of Certain Metro-North Commuter Rail Passes after Rail Service Outages Lasting More than Forty-Eight Hours

#### Transportation Committee

February 13, 2013

Good morning, Chairmen Maynard and Guerrero, Ranking Members Boucher and Scribner, and former fellow members of the Transportation Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 5127.

This bill would allow rail passengers who have bought weekly or monthly tickets to extend their validity when service is disrupted for 48 hours or more.

Long lasting service disruptions are becoming more common as severe storms have become more frequent. The problem is particularly acute for Metro-North's branch lines, where, as an example, there have been service disruptions during the past year that have lasted as long as 8 days. Bus service is not always available, and commuters are left with no means of travel, and no refunds.

If commuters cannot be given refunds, then extending ticket validity provides a way to give them credit for money they have spent.

Many constituents who have contacted me have pointed out that airlines provide refunds or new tickets to passengers when flights are canceled, and they are surprised that Metro-North cannot do the same.

While the bill refers only to Metro-North, it would be consistent to apply a similar policy to Shoreline East and any other future rail lines in the state as well.

Commuters should not have to pay for service they do not receive. This bill would give them the fair treatment they deserve.