



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Office of the
Commissioner

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Public Hearing – February 13, 2013 Transportation Committee

**Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Jim Redeker
Department of Transportation**

Proposed H.B. 5181 – An Act Extending the Danbury Branch of the Metro North Railroad to New Milford.

The Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) is currently in the process of completing the Danbury Branch Improvement Program Environmental Analysis. This was an exhaustive study of a range of passenger rail and transit service improvements to the Danbury Branch Line between Norwalk and Danbury and the Housatonic Railroad Line between Danbury and New Milford.

The analysis of the Housatonic Railroad Line determined that the whole line would need to be reconstructed which would require new ballast, new ties, new rail, new switches, new sidings, new bridges/culverts, new signal/communication system, new stations and parking. If the Danbury Branch were to be electrified, the Housatonic Line would have to be electrified also.

As part of the Environmental Analysis, ConnDOT modeled the ridership forecast for the improvements on the Housatonic Line. For a diesel service on the Housatonic Line, the boardings in New Milford would be 131 passengers and boardings in Brookfield would be 117 passengers. If the line were to be electrified, the boardings in New Milford would be 162 passengers and Brookfield would be 123 passengers.

The planning level capital cost for reconstructing the Housatonic Line for diesel service would be \$352,250,000. The planning level capital cost to reconstruct the line and to electrify the line would cost \$501,440,000.

At the present time, the Department does not have the funding in its Capital Plan to institute passenger rail service between Danbury and New Milford.

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

