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**Testimony in support of legislation to enforce no-smoking policy on all Metro-North Railroad platforms in the State of CT**

I am pleased to be here today and to provide testimony in support of legislation to enforce no-smoking policy on all Metro-North Railroad platforms in the State of CT. I support this legislation in order to make the train platforms in CT environmentally and physically safe.

I was told by the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) that they have a system wide policy of no-smoking on all their train platforms but that it could not be enforced within the State of CT. When I inquired why I was told that even though it is a system wide policy only the Governor of NY State has signed legislation to enforce the no-smoking policy whereas the Governor of CT has not. The MTA recommended I try and have legislation passed in CT so that no-smoking signs could go up and the MTA police could enforce the same no-smoking policy in CT as they have done in New York.

I am not here to provide details on the serious health impacts of smoking however almost everyone knows that smoking causes cancer, emphysema and heart disease. And it is also widely known that second hand smoke also increases the risks of the diseases just mentioned.

Some of the reasons that no-smoking should be enforced on train platforms are as follows;

- The State of CT has done a very good job of demonstrating the benefits of using and providing public transportation. Ridership has increased significantly on the New Haven line of Metro-North. If you've stood and waited for a morning or evening train on any of the CT train platforms you will see for yourself how crowded some of these platforms get.
- Standing next to a smoker on a crowded train platform impacts my ability to avoid the dangers of second hand smoke.
- After showering every morning and putting on a suit and tie to go to work it's very discouraging for someone to ask me "I didn't know you smoked"? I don't smoke but have to explain that someone on the train platform this morning caused my clothes to smell from smoke. (My dry cleaning bill has increased due to the frequency needed to remove the smoke smell.)
- As mentioned previously the train platforms are very crowded and you must consider the safety of all patrons of Metro-North. Lit cigarettes and open flames in such a confined area have got to be a safety concern.
- When a smoker is finished with their cigarette their means of extinguishment is simply to throw the lit butt onto the train tracks. With the amount of grease and other flammable materials on the tracks it is a huge fire hazard to throw the cigarette on the tracks as a means of extinguishment. In addition to the grease there is a large amount of paper and other debris which serves as combustible material to a lit cigarette butt.
- The majority of my time riding Metro-North in CT is for the purpose of commuting to and from work. However I have also increased my usage of this system on weekends for recreational use. I have noticed numerous families with small children utilizing the trains as well. We all know we have an obligation to protect our children from the known hazards of cigarette smoke and enforcing this no-smoking policy will contribute towards protecting our children from those dangers.

The State of CT supports protecting the health and safety of its citizens but needs to do more. It can do more by passing this proposed legislation to enforce a no-smoking policy on all train platforms in CT. I ask that you vote yes to pass this legislation and say "yes" to encourage a safe and healthy environment for those who ride the trains of Metro-North. Thank you for your time today.