



# OLR RESEARCH REPORT

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## QUESTIONS FOR METRO NORTH COMMUTER COUNCIL NOMINEE

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### **METRO NORTH NEW HAVEN RAIL COMMUTER COUNCIL (CGS § 13B-212B, 212C)**

- Studies and investigates all aspects of the daily operation of the New Haven commuter railroad line.
- Monitors the rail line's performance and recommends changes to improve its efficiency and quality of service. The council may request, and receive from any department, agency, or political subdivision of the state, any assistance and data it requests to properly carry out its duties.
- Annually makes findings and recommendations to the governor, transportation commissioner, Connecticut Public Transportation Commission, General Assembly, New York Metro North Rail Commuter Council, and Management Advisory Board and Office of the Inspector General of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) in New York.

## **NOMINEE QUESTIONS**

1. Station parking continues as one of the most difficult issues for the New Haven Line and Shore Line East. What progress do you think has been made on solving station parking problems? What remains to be done?
2. As you may know, many Stamford commuters are unhappy with Department of Transportation (DOT) plans to replace hundreds of parking spaces in the dilapidated Stamford parking garage with a new facility that may be one-quarter mile away. Some commuters say they are displeased not only with the prospect of a longer walk to the station, but with what they say has been DOT's secrecy regarding plans to develop the new parking facility. Do you think the commuters' concerns are warranted? Should DOT have handled the situation differently, and if so, how?
3. What can the state do to improve Metro North's performance and better monitor its operations?
4. What is the best scenario for integrating train and transit service when trains are operating on the New Haven Line, Shore Line East, and along the New Haven-Hartford-Springfield corridor? Are there alternatives not being considered at present that you think should be?
5. What types of transit-oriented development around existing and new rail stations do you think would have the greatest benefit for those currently riding the trains and for attracting new riders? What can the council do to encourage these developments?
6. What are the issues that may be hampering the development of better service on branch lines, in particular the Danbury and Waterbury branches? Should the Danbury line be extended to New Milford?
7. Can the council play a greater role in trying to resolve some of the issues that appear to constrain the state's ability to expand service on Shore Line East? How do you think the interests of rail commuters and recreational marine traffic can best be accommodated?

8. Are you satisfied with the rate at which the new M-8 cars are entering service?
9. In December 2012, Metro North adopted a pledge to passengers that, among other things, promised to improve communication, maintain clean and comfortable service, and provide alternative transportation in emergencies. In your opinion, how has Metro North lived up to this pledge?
10. What, if anything, should be done to ensure that revenue from Metro North fare hikes are used only to improve rail service?
11. According to a recent news article, commuters would like to have additional cars on each train in return for increased fares. Do you support this idea?
12. Should commuters be entitled to ticket refunds when train service is cancelled because of bad weather?

PF:tjo