



## State of Connecticut

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

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### Testimony in Support of HB 6166

#### An Act Authorizing Municipalities to Fund Construction of Sound Barriers Along Interstate Highways

#### Transportation Committee

February 4, 2013

Good morning, Chairmen Maynard and Guerrera, Ranking Members Boucher and Scribner, and former fellow members of the Transportation Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 6166.

This year, the boundaries of the 143<sup>rd</sup> district changed to include the Old Saugatuck area of Westport. Many new constituents in this area have asked me about the possibility of constructing sound barriers to address the issue of noise generated by heavy traffic on I-95. Constituents in Norwalk have also inquired about the same subject.

The problem is real. I have visited Westport homes on Cricket Lane, Robert Lane, Sachem Trail, and Indian Hill Road, and the noise is so loud that it can be difficult to carry on a conversation just outside these homes. The noise level inside is disturbing, and constant.

Nearby areas in Norwalk and elsewhere in Westport are similarly affected.

I have spoken with DOT Commissioner Redeker, and he has confirmed that there are no near-term plans to construct sound barriers in the area, primarily for cost reasons. This is understandable, particularly given the state's financial situation.

This bill therefore does not propose funding for the construction of sound barriers. Instead, it would allow municipalities, should they so choose, to issue their own bonds, or

otherwise raise funds, that could then be used by the DOT to construct the sound barriers using its own procedures and standards.

The purpose is to give local governments and residents more flexibility and decision-making power in shaping their local environments, while avoiding the imposition of further financial obligations on the DOT.

I respectfully urge the Committee to approve this proposal.