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Good afternoon Senator Looney, Representative Janowski and members of the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee. It is a privilege to be before you. I would also like to take time to thank Senate President Pro Tempore, Donald Williams, Jr. for re-nominating me as a member of the Connecticut Commuter Rail Council.

I have been on the council for eight years. I served as the Co-Vice Chairman for eight years and have recently been elected Chair of the council. I am honored to have the opportunity to serve another term.

It has been a very trying year for Connecticut commuters. We endured many years of train breakdowns prior to getting the new M8 cars and now we are facing a breakdown of the infrastructure of the railroad. We need to put our attention on the commuter rails—how they are run, how they are funded and how safe they are.

Commuters spend quite a bit of money per month to ride the rails and they deserve a safe and dependable rail system. We need to work together to see what we can do to help bring back the confidence of the daily rider. The rail system is imperative to the economy for this region—especially Connecticut. We need to work together to help get the funding necessary to make this the best commuter rail system in the United States!

I think another priority of the council—after safety—should be to help work with Metro North and CDOT in improving the communication to the riders. It starts with accurately letting people know where their train is and if it is on time, to the announcements on the platforms, to listening and responding to complaints and finally, how we communicate in an emergency. People want to be informed and we need to find a better way to communicate.

I am on the commuter council because I want to advocate for the commuter. I have no other agenda but to represent the rider with Metro North and CDOT. I have always tried to be the voice of my fellow commuters with these agencies—and believe me—I hear from them daily. We need to find a way to keep the channel open for discussion on all issues that the riding public wants and needs to know about.

I also want to express my appreciation to Governor Malloy and the Connecticut Legislators in their efforts in making Metro North come to the table and give us answers. We have more work to do and I feel we are headed in the right direction.

I am proud to represent my fellow commuters in the efforts of the state to make rail transportation a better experience. I appreciate this opportunity and your support of my confirmation.

Thank you for your time. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.