



**Testimony Submitted By Suzanne Bates, Policy Director of the Yankee Institute for Public Policy, to the Finance Committee on HB 6840.**

April 27, 2015

The Yankee Institute for Public Policy is a Connecticut think tank that develops and advances policy solutions to promote smart, limited government; fairness for taxpayers; and an open road to opportunity for all the people of our state.

I would like to convey our thoughts on HB 6840, “An Act Concerning Investments in Connecticut’s Transportation Infrastructure.”

Connecticut’s transportation infrastructure undoubtedly needs upgrading. But in order to accomplish this goal we need to set priorities and streamline our current spending.

I would like to raise two concerns with Gov. Malloy’s plans for upgrades to our transportation infrastructure.

First, given the nature of our existing debt – we are the most indebted state per capita in the nation – we should prioritize our spending to the most necessary projects first, and should not embark on expensive new projects until we get our existing infrastructure into a more manageable state.

Second, Connecticut spends seven times the national average on administrative costs per mile of highway. The 50-state average is \$10,579 a mile, while we average \$77,000 per mile on administrative costs, which is the second highest cost per mile in the nation. We must look for ways to streamline current operations.

The governor seeks to add 165 new positions to the Department of Transportation over the next two years, which will only increase these administrative costs. Instead of adding new positions, the department should look for ways to streamline and reconfigure existing positions so that it is able to meet future needs with its current level of personnel.