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February 10, 2015

Transportation Committee
Connecticut General Assembly
Legislative Office Building, Room 2300
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: H.B. 6343: An act concerning the restoration of the Housatonic Rail Line

Dear Representative Guerrero, Senator Maynard, Senator Boucher, Representative O'Dea and distinguished members of the Transportation Committee:

As a small business owner and as the newly elected Chair of Cornwall's Economic Development Commission, I write this letter in absolute support of upgrades to the Housatonic Railroad line tracks from New Milford to the Massachusetts state line in Canaan through Cornwall.

This rail line is of crucial economic importance to our region. Its poor condition has inhibited its use for both freight service and has led to several derailments. State investments in upgrading these State owned tracks is needed to:

- 1) Protect the continuing operation of freight service to the region's five major industries and employers.
- 2) Potentially adding passenger service, that will increase the attractiveness of the NW corner to entrepreneurs, existing businesses and young families to ensure our economic health.
- 3) Protect environmentally sensitive areas that this railroad runs through by preventing derailments.
- 4) Continue to reduce truck traffic on our State maintained roads. This rail line plays an important role in reducing truck traffic along our two lane highways.

With renewed interest in upgrading long neglected infrastructure throughout the state this is the time to remedy a problem that has existed for far too long.

Sincerely,

Janet Carlson

Janet Carlson

Managing Partner, One Eleven Group
Economic Development Commission, Chair
Town of Cornwall