

**TO:** Transportation Committee Co-Chairs Guerrera and Maynard, and Transportation Committee Members

**FROM:** Lyle Wray, Executive Director, Capitol Region Council of Governments

**SUBJECT:** Support for SB 494, An Act Authorizing Special Tax Obligation Bonds for a Rail Station in Enfield and HB 6339, An Act Requiring Construction of a Commuter Rail Station in Enfield

**DATE:** February 11, 2015

The Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) strongly supports SB 494, An Act Authorizing Special Tax Obligation Bonds for a Rail Station in Enfield, and HB 6339-An Act Requiring Construction of a Commuter Rail Station in Enfield. Full completion of the New Haven-Hartford-Springfield rail service, including construction of new stations, is one of the top five strategic transportation priorities of the Capitol Region Council of Governments. Completion of the final elements of the system—including the Enfield Rail Station--will help ensure the success of the commuter rail service.

CRCOG has been working closely with the Town of Enfield over several years to catalyze transit-oriented development in the vicinity of Enfield's Thompsonville Train Station. Through a HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant, CRCOG was able to fund the Thompsonville Zoning Study which laid the groundwork for new zoning regulations that can support transit-oriented development. This grant also funded the Enfield Transit Study, which conducted service planning for a Magic Carpet circulator bus, which is now providing much-needed bus service to Thompsonville's low and moderate-income residents, and will also complement the future rail service. Finally, Enfield was one of twelve communities to participate in a Sustainable Land Use Regulation Project, which included development of model regulations for Mixed-Use Transit-Oriented Development Districts.

These planning efforts, and others undertaken by the Town of Enfield on its own, demonstrate the town's strong commitment to making Thompsonville a vital neighborhood where people come to live, work and play. Existing residents and newcomers will benefit from and support the new investments in NHHS rail service, Enfield's Thompsonville Transportation Center, and the Magic Carpet Circulator Bus Service. Adding to this list construction of the Enfield Train Station, which is envisioned to be a mixed-use property that will include housing and commercial businesses along with the train platforms, will further revitalize the neighborhood and increase demand for the commuter rail service.

The Capitol Region Council of Governments urges the Transportation Committee to give favorable consideration to SB 494 and HB 6339.