Waterbury Regional Chamber
driving business to business

February 11, 2015

STATEMENT OF JOHN DICARLO, PUBLIC POLICY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR of the WATERBURY REGIONAL CHAMBER for the TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE on S.B. 478 (RAISED) AN ACT AN ACT CONCERNING AN EXPANSION OF BUS SERVICE IN WATERBURY.

Good afternoon Senator Leone, Representative Guerrera and members of Transportation Committee. I'm John DiCarlo, Public Policy & Economic Development Director for the Waterbury Regional Chamber. The Waterbury Regional Chamber, which serves 13 towns in the Greater Waterbury region and represents the collective interests of nearly 1,000 businesses in matters of public policy and economic development, supports Senate Bill 478, An Act An Act Concerning An Expansion Of Bus Service In Waterbury.

The Waterbury Regional Chamber membership has included businesses in the section of Waterbury that this bill would serve for many decades. In the late 1990s, a Chamber organization dedicated to addressing business needs in this area, the Wolcott Street-Lakewood Road Business Association, was formed following concerns of decreased traffic that could accompany the closing of the Naugatuck Valley Mall. The mall was a commerce anchor for the area for nearly 30 years.

While Wolcott Street-Lakewood Road Business Association has since played a role in helping area businesses thrive, the lack of a bus route remains a serious issue. Customers and employees currently have no direct bus route connecting the area to Chase Avenue, another busy commercial section of the city. In addition to the lack of opportunities to patronize businesses in this area, the situation represents a serious public safety concern. Many choose to walk this section, despite the fact that there are not consistent or safe sidewalks throughout Lakewood Road. This has resulted in multiple vehicle-pedestrian accidents in past years, including fatalities.

By establishing a bus route, the bill would provide much-needed access to local employment, shopping destinations and elderly and low-income housing and improve pedestrian safety. Thank you for your consideration. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

John DiCarlo
Public Policy & Economic Development Director

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