



# State of Connecticut

## SENATE

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February 23, 2015

Sen. Maynard, Rep. Guerrero, and members of the Transportation Committee,

I am Sen. Art Linares, and I am testifying in support of [Senate Bill 833: An Act Concerning Notice to Allow for Public Comment Prior to Tree Cutting by the Department of Transportation](#).

Last May, many of my constituents contacted me regarding a tree trimming project on Route 9, between exits 2-4. They were very concerned that all of the trees had been removed, leaving a bare median, rather than selectively trimming trees within a certain number of feet of the road.

These constituents wanted input on such a large project. They believed removing all of the trees created a nighttime hazard, with nothing remaining to block oncoming headlights from the other side of the highway. They questioned whether arborists were consulted to determine if the trees were diseased, or were of an invasive species, and when removed, if the Department of Transportation would replace them with more desirable native trees. They wanted the opportunity to get these questions answered, but there was no mechanism in place for them to do so.

Other legislators have had similar feedback from their constituents in other parts of the state.

My proposed bill would require that the Department of Transportation notify towns of large tree-trimming projects on state roads, over an agreed-upon square mileage. The towns, in turn, would place a notice on the town website, with contact information for the Department of Transportation. If enough public comment is generated, the Department of Transportation could hold a public hearing, as they already do for construction and repair projects, and allow constituents to share their concerns and get their questions answered.

The utility companies now have a protocol in place before trees are removed from private property; this bill will address the same issues for state property.

Thank you for your consideration of SB 833.