

To TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE, TESTIMONY OF Michael Mercurino  
For Meeting of 2/29/2016

January 29, 2016

James P. Redeker, Commissioner DOT  
2800 Berlin Turnpike  
Newington, CT 06111

Re: West Haven Train Station

Dear Mr. Redeker,

I am writing this letter regarding the West Haven Train Station, the station has been in operation for the past 2 ½ years. There are several very important factors that DOT has been ignoring, Connecticut transit bus service [for one] has not been engaged to ridership at station, bus service was promised to the station's front doors, in fact my understanding is hundreds of thousands of dollars have been spent on curb cuts for this purpose. Commuters are being picked up and dropped off on Sawmill Rd, a very busy and highly traveled road with topography of a very large hill. I have also not seen a sign stating West Haven Train Station as a destination on any bus or program. I must add that the West Haven Train Station was financed by State bonding of \$130,000,000, no federal money was involved. Another promise was the correlation of Shoreline East to and from the West Haven Station, your lucky if you can find one or two direct without stopping and boarding in New Haven.

We haven't even been able to get a small coffee shop for our commuters in this busy, beautiful state of the art station on Metro North Line.

A parking garage was also part of the plan which was designed and paid for with state bond money. The garage was then pulled from the plan even though it was bonded with State bond money. Our group at that time along with West Haven Chamber of Commerce tried to save the garage with no success. The garage was estimated for some 12 to 15 million dollars, which was part of the \$130,000,000, which we were told was used elsewhere. Parking at the Station is just about filled; there has never been a promotional marketing plan. There are commuters in the North Western part of our region, Orange, Bethany, Woodbridge and Milford who don't know how easy it would be to get to the West Haven Train Station from their homes. I might also mention there is no enforcement for paying for parking, my understanding is the State can't enforce it, but the city of West Haven can, in hearsay there is \$3000 to \$4000 being lost a

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month that could go for maintenance. We have been working to try and get the station running functionally like any other station of its size on Metro North. I have had several meetings over the past year and half with DOT and quite a number of emails were shared.

In conclusion, if this is any indication of what the Governor's transportation plans are, we better take a hard and better look at WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON.

Sincerely,



Michael Mercuriano

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Chairman West Haven Train Station Committee

Chairman West Haven Parking and Transportation Task Force

Cc: Senator Richard Blumenthal

Cc: Senator Christopher Murphy

Cc: Jim Cameron