STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Testimony of Commissioner James P. Redeker
Appropriations Committee
Fiscal Year 2017 Midterm Operating Budget
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Legislative Office Building, Hearing Room 2C

Good afternoon Chairwoman Bye, Chairwoman Walker, and members of the Committee. I am James P. Redeker, Commissioner of the Department of Transportation. I am pleased to appear before you today to discuss Governor Dannel P. Malloy's recommended mid-term Operating Budget for the Department of Transportation.

I would like to begin with the Department's vision. *Let's Go CT!* is the Governor's 30-year, $100 billion vision for transportation. It represents a historic roadmap for Connecticut's future. Last year marked the 120th anniversary of the establishment of the Connecticut Department of Transportation, the oldest DOT in the country. Last year also marked the first transportation vision based on economic growth and quality of life for this state. Never before has there been a vision to propel our economy and make Connecticut a place where people and business want to locate because of the ease of safe and efficient travel with or without owning a car.

This transportation vision has a laser-like focus on strong economic growth, energy efficiency, sustainability, and exceptional quality of life in Connecticut. This is a complete departure from historic plans that, at best, made investments to minimally address system crises and deplorable highway, bus and rail performance conditions. In an effort to simplify this very comprehensive transportation program, the vision of the DOT is to deliver a transportation system that:

- Eliminates pervasive, obsolete and deficient highway, bridge, and rail system conditions
- Invests in high performing, new rail, bus, highway and pedestrian and bicycle capacity
- Propels Connecticut's economy and distinguishes the state as a premier choice for residential, business and recreational location

The Department and I appreciate the Legislature's actions during the 2015 session. Approving the five-year ramp up plan was the beginning of an ambitious, progressive and long-overdue multi-modal program to address the state's transportation infrastructure needs. I also appreciate the General Assembly providing the Department with the critical staffing it needs to deliver our services and projects to the citizens of Connecticut. We endeavor at all times to provide the best return on that investment as possible, with continuous improvements in all areas being our philosophy and goal, as I will discuss in more detail next.

The Department is taking strategic, yet judicious steps to address the ramp-up program, while remaining dedicated to our core services. The citizens and businesses of Connecticut must be able to count on the Department to:

- Operate and maintain safe and efficient state-owned highways, bridges, rail, transit, bicycle and pedestrian systems
- Be accountable for system conditions and performance
- Deliver capital program priorities based on asset management and economic impact priorities

The Department will manage this budget with the discipline and management principles that we have adopted since I have been Commissioner. In all of our actions, we embrace the values of integrity, communication, customer service, cost-effectiveness and innovation. I would like to offer a few examples the outcomes of this organizational focus. First, when I became Commissioner, the DOT initiated a total of $400 million of construction awards. Three years later, with the same staff, we set a goal of $800 million in awards, but actually achieved a record $1.2 billion in construction awards. Second, we successfully demonstrated significant innovation by utilizing Accelerated Bridge Construction and replacing the I84 bridges in Southington in a single weekend (and finishing 9 hours ahead of schedule). A third and major achievement was the opening of the Pearl Harbor Memorial Bridge this year with the overall program 8 months ahead of schedule and $200 million under budget.

As we plan to administer the proposed FY2017 budget, we are guided by the following specific management strategies to meet or exceed the requirements of the FY2017 operating budget. We will:

- Continue implementing LEAN in DOT
- Implement new technology for operations and capital program management
- Redeploy existing staff and expand cross training where possible
- Focus hiring on positions that align with agency core services

Governor Malloy's recommended Special Transportation Fund appropriations of $708 million and Capital authorizations of $1.35 billion for the Department demonstrate a continued, dedicated commitment to improving Connecticut's multimodal transportation system of roads, bridges, buses, trains, maritime, and bicycle and pedestrian systems.

The Governor's proposed midterm Operating Budget essentially sustains the funding levels enacted last spring, and also includes new proposals to fund the establishment of the Transit Corridor Development Assistance Authority, and the launching of Bus service between Waterbury and Torrington The recommended budget also contains a shift of $68 million in funds from the State Comptroller to the Department for specific Fringe Benefits, so those costs can be reported as part of agency operations, rather than centrally. This consolidation will give more flexibility in managing the Department and more transparency as we report Department expenditures. In total, apart from the Fringe adjustment, the Department's bottom line appropriated budget reflects an increase of less than one half of one percent.

The majority of the Department's Operating funds are dedicated to providing transportation related services that the citizens of our state have all have come to expect. Public Transportation services, including Bus, Rail and ADA account for more than fifty percent of our funding. The majority of the remaining resources are dedicated to essential highway safety, roadway maintenance and snow plowing.

The Department will continue to strive to perform its core services in the most cost-effective manner by streamlining agency operations and taking advantage of technology and process improvements through LEAN innovations that are central to the Department's business practices.

I look forward to working with you to implement a budget that allows for continued preservation and improvement of the State's transportation network, and enables us to deliver the superior transportation system that the citizens of Connecticut deserve.

I will be happy to answer any questions.