

JOSEPH R. SCULLEY
PRESIDENT

Statement of Joseph R. Sculley
President
Motor Transport Association of Connecticut
Before
The Joint Committee on
Finance Revenue and Bonding
March 18, 2016

**Re: Bill No. 453 AN ACT CONCERNING REMISSION OF REVENUE
FROM CERTAIN TRAFFIC FINES TO MUNICIPALITIES**

I am Joe Sculley, President of Motor Transport Association of Connecticut (MTAC), a statewide trade association, which represents almost 700 companies that operate commercial motor vehicles in and through the state of Connecticut. Our membership includes freight haulers, movers of household goods, construction companies, distributors, tank truck operators and hundreds of companies that use trucks in their business and firms that provide goods and services to truck owners.

MTAC opposes this bill.

MTAC opposes this bill in the strongest of possible terms. It provides that the three municipalities be allowed to receive half of the state traffic fines for blocking an intersection.

This is a perfect example of a diversion of transportation revenue that should be going to the Special Transportation Fund (STF). The legislature is in the midst of considering the “lockbox” proposal, which would be created by Constitutional amendment. This bill should be considered a signal that there is a clear intention to continue to raid the Special Transportation Fund to send transportation revenue to non-transportation purposes, whether there is a lockbox or not. If the current version of the lockbox were to become law, and this bill was being considered next session instead of this session, it would not make any difference. The current version of the lockbox would not stop this diversion of revenue. Not only could this fine revenue be diverted now or after the hypothetical passage of this lockbox, so could fuel taxes, registration fees, or anything else.

Under existing law, there already exists significant diversion of fine revenue, which we believe ought to all be deposited in the STF:

As this bill illustrates, Section 51-56a CGS already authorizes several examples of diversion of what should be STF revenue:



- Under (b), all of the funds generated by fines for operating an unregistered motor vehicle are remitted to municipalities.
- Under (c), an additional \$1 surcharge is added for every \$8 of fine paid for unregistered vehicles, operating under suspension, speeding, reckless driving, overweight, and more, is paid for municipal police training. This surcharge is paid to the state's General Fund.
- Under (d) a \$15 surcharge is applied to all violations including speeding, reckless driving, left lane operation, improper passing, one way violations, following too close, right on red, at grade crossing, cattle crossing, stop sign, failure to yield and several other violations. This surcharge is paid to the municipality where the violation occurs regardless of whether a local or state official issues the summons.
- Under (e) the STF only gets 12% of the fine for failure to stop for a school bus. The municipality where the ticket is written gets the balance of the fine revenue after the state's General Fund receives 8% of the fine

Now, under this bill, the cities of Bridgeport, Hartford and New Haven would be able to receive 50% of the fine for blocking an intersection.

Not only is this a diversion of revenue, it will incentivize the issuance of tickets.

The cities want state fines to subsidize their budgets. If the Legislature is serious about protecting the STF, this bill ought to be rejected. If this bill goes forward it is further evidence that transportation funding must be protected with a strong Constitutional Amendment....stronger language than currently exists in HJR 1.