

E: Testimony on **Raised Bill No. 5601**

Dear Co-Chairs Osten and Miller:

I am writing in support of the *Act Concerning the Connecticut Transportation Institute and a Study of School Transportation Efficiencies*. In a rural school district such as RSD#17, to which Killingworth belongs, the cost of transporting our students is enormous—\$3.5 million this year. We have almost 200 miles of roads.

I understand that we are currently required to run buses every day on every route where an enrolled child resides. In our school district, this means that bus routes are very long, and—maybe partly because of that—many children don't use them. Our buses seem to be quite empty. The result of the requirement is both economically and environmentally damaging.

In the age of Uber-like apps and instant communication, we should be able to develop a system that allows parents to sign up for a semester or a year, allows buses to be assigned on the basis of those advance agreements, and perhaps offers some sort of service in the event of emergency needs. The Estuary Transit District, which serves Killingworth and nine other towns, is already using technology that allows real-time route adjustments. This and other models should provide ample evidence on which new designs for school bus services can be explored and created.

I urge that the CTI be charged with investigating ways to reduce the number of school bus-miles traveled, and paid for, each year.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Iino