



STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



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**Public Hearing – February 25, 2019
Transportation Committee**

**Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Joe Giulietti
Department of Transportation**

Proposed H.B. 5287 - AN ACT PERMITTING UTILITY SERVICE VEHICLES TO TRAVEL THE MERRITT AND WILBUR CROSS PARKWAYS WHEN RESPONDING TO EMERGENCIES.

The Department of Transportation (CTDOT) offers the following comments and recommendations on Proposed H.B. 5287, AA Permitting Utility Service Vehicles to Travel the Merritt and Wilbur Cross Parkways when Responding to Emergencies.

Current CTDOT regulations governing the use of the Merritt and Wilbur Cross Parkways (RCSA 14-298-252) state the following:

“When emergency requires, the state police commissioner or his authorized representative may grant permission for the use of the parkways by vehicles normally excluded therefrom. Such permission shall designate the vehicle or vehicles and shall specify the portion of the parkways over which travel will be permitted.”

The parkways have many bridges that do not have adequate vertical clearance for taller vehicles that are still within the legal height limit of 13 feet, 6 inches. Consequently, if the current regulation (14-298-252) does not meet the intended need, then the bill would need to be amended to reflect the needs regarding the maximum height of the utility vehicles that would be allowed on the parkways.

The Department’s Office of State Traffic Administration (OSTA) has researched the height issue in the past and would recommend a maximum height of 10 feet to ensure that the vehicles can get under all the bridges on the parkways in Connecticut. In addition, some of the sharper on-ramps and off-ramps may not be able to accommodate longer vehicles, so OSTA would also recommend that the utility vehicles be limited to a maximum length of 30 feet. CTDOT further recommends the bill should include the Milford Parkway in any revised language.

For further information or questions, please contact Pam Sucato (pamela.sucato@ct.gov) or Alicia Leite (alicia.leite@ct.gov) at the Department of Transportation, (860) 594-3013.