

7 March 2021

Dear Members of the Environment Committee,

My name is Abigail Roth and I am a resident of New Haven and also serve on the New Haven Board of Alders. I strongly support Connecticut SB 884, *An Act Reducing Transportation-Related Carbon Emissions*, but believe it is critical to make some important amendments to the bill so that it directly benefits communities most impacted by poverty and pollution.

I urge you to pass SB 884 after amending it in the following ways:

(1) SB 884 does not explicitly address neighborhood level pollution where communities of color and low-income communities often breathe the dirtiest air. I urge you to amend the bill so that it requires guaranteed local emission reductions in the communities facing the greatest exposure to pollution. The very concerning health disparity across New Haven communities, caused in part by environmental factors, is an example of why this change is so important; and

(2) Communities most impacted by our transportation system must have a strong voice in directing how investments are spent. Please amend the bill to give the equity advisory board clear responsibilities to shape the program and provide members with technical assistance to support their participation. People who actually use the bus system, for example, have the knowledge of the changes that are needed.

This bill can reduce emissions from our transportation system and invest in needed transportation solutions such as expanded mass transit, safe walking routes, and bike lanes. SB 884 also can help improve public health, advance our state's climate change goals, and support an inclusive economic recovery - enabling the state to lead the region in its implementation of a more fair and just Transportation and Climate Initiative Program. But SB 884 needs stronger equity safeguards to begin addressing historic disparities in access to transportation and exposure to pollution. Please strengthen SB 884 to ensure it benefits communities in Connecticut who need it the most.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Abigail Roth
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