



**Testimony
Betsy Gara
Executive Director
Connecticut Council of Small Towns
Before the Transportation Committee
February 19, 2021**

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) **supports** **HB-5423 – An Act Concerning the Expansion of Passenger Train and Ground Transportation Services in Eastern Connecticut.**

Shore Line East has proven to be very beneficial in providing residents and visitors with rail transportation options. In addition to providing commuters with an efficient way to get to work, rail transportation is helpful in reducing traffic congestion and carbon emissions.

HB-5423 calls for the state Department of Transportation to conduct a feasibility study and develop an operational plan to extend Shore Line East.

Extending Shore Line East to other regions in Eastern Connecticut would be a valuable tool in attracting employees and visitors to the towns in this region.

COST urges **support** for **HB-5423**.

Thank you.

COST is an advocacy organization committed to giving small towns a strong voice in the legislative process. Its members are Connecticut towns with populations of less than 30,000. COST champions the major policy needs and concerns of Connecticut's suburban and rural towns.