

Captain G. Michael and Lynda Hewitt, USN (Ret)

10 Riverview Ave.

Groton/Noank, CT 06340-5737

H. B. 5423

February 17, 2021

Statement in Support of **H.B. 5423**

***AN ACT CONCERNING THE EXPANSION OF PASSENGER TRAIN AND
GROUND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES IN EASTERN CONNECTICUT***

Our family is a Navy family, we have moved around the country from 1964 until we settled in Groton/Noank in 1984 while still on active duty. Therefore, we have experienced traffic in Southeastern Connecticut and Rhode Island for the past 37 years. While on active duty, CAPT Hewitt served on a submarine undergoing overhaul at Electric Boat, served another tour of duty at the Submarine Base and his last tour on active duty was as Commanding Officer of USS *Fulton*, at State Pier in New London. Following retirement from active duty in 1990, CAPT Hewitt has worked for Sonalysts, Inc. until the present which required many trips to Newport, RI as well as to the TF Green Airport in Providence. Lynda Hewitt worked as a home-care Physical Therapist and later in the Groton School System which required local travel between work sites. Their travel was frequently negatively impacted by traffic congestion.

Currently we travel monthly to Boston and, as the Covid travel restrictions are lifted, we would be much more likely to take advantage of the expanded Shore Line East service for visits to New York and Boston as well as other New England locations.

We offer our past travel experience in Southeast Connecticut as our personal evidence that the I-95 and associated roadway congestion in this region is very bad during the tourist season and it is only going to get worse. In the 37 years that we have been traveling these highways and roads, traffic has clearly increased. The Navy and Electric Boat workload will be increasing and that will also mean that dependents, families and supporting businesses will also be increasing. Again, on a personal note, our daughter and grandchildren who live in the area will be making personal decisions as to the desirability of remaining in the region. They are very aware of the need to limit Greenhouse Gas Emissions and efforts such as this proposal will be seen as a favorable effort on the part of the State.

We urge passage of House Bill 5423 and expanded passenger rail service for eastern Connecticut and Rhode Island.

Thank you,

G. Michael and Lynda Hewitt