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Transportation Committee
February 19, 2021
Zoom 10:00 AM

In **SUPPORT** of Senate Bill 409
*An Act Concerning The Nonemergency Transportation Of
Persons With Disabilities Confined To A Stretcher*

Vice Chairman Cassano, Chairman Lemar and distinguished members of the Transportation Committee, I am here to testify in **support** of Senate Bill 409, *An Act Concerning The Nonemergency Transportation Of Persons With Disabilities Confined To A Stretcher*.

My name is Cathy Osten and I represent the 19th Senate District, which includes the towns of Columbia, Franklin, Hebron, Lebanon, Ledyard, Lisbon, Marlborough, Montville, Norwich, and Sprague.

In 2012, our state permitted livery companies and other DOT-certified services to transport those individuals with disabilities, who are confined to a stretcher, for non-medical purposes. However, in the following year, it was learned that Medicaid would not reimburse these companies for non-medical transportation, although, that did not stop the need of those confined to a stretcher from needing to make non-medical related trips.

To be clear, this bill does NOT seek to have nonemergency transportation covered by Medicaid. This bill would simply expand nonemergency transportation options for private pay. Rather than depending solely on an ambulance company to provide non-medical trips, which, on average, cost each constituent at least double what a taxi fare would cost, I believe we should allow our constituents a choice in their transportation options. Having the opportunity to visit family or make a trip to the grocery store, gives them a freedom they otherwise would not have. In addition, we can lessen the burden on our local ambulance companies as they are currently the only permitted transportation option allowed under state statute.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in **support** of Senate Bill 409. I look forward to working with the leadership and members of this committee on this bill's passage.