
OLR Bill Analysis

SB 1078

AN ACT CONCERNING RAIL SERVICE.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Department of Transportation (DOT) to take several actions to increase rail service in the state. It requires DOT to restore service on the Shore Line East rail line to the same service level that existed before it was reduced in 2020 because of the COVID-19 public health and civil preparedness emergency declarations. It also authorizes and directs the DOT commissioner to contract with one or more operators for this service through a competitive selection process.

The bill requires DOT to purchase and install new rail cars for use on the Waterbury and Danbury branches of the New Haven line and to expand these branches to include the towns of:

1. New Milford on the Danbury branch; and
2. Seymour, Shelton, and Derby on the Waterbury branch.

Lastly, the bill requires the commissioner to study the future of railroads in the state, including the feasibility of (1) establishing service between Hartford and Middletown and (2) operating hybrid trains on the Danbury branch. He must submit these study results to the Transportation Committee by February 1, 2024.

By law, the New Haven Line means service between New Haven and intermediate points and Grand Central Station and includes the Danbury, Waterbury, and New Canaan branch lines. Shore Line East includes rail service between New Haven and New London.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

COMMITTEE ACTION

Transportation Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 36 Nay 0 (03/17/2023)