

Transportation Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6670

AN ACT STUDYING THE CONSOLIDATION OF METROPOLITAN PLANNING

Title: ORGANIZATIONS.

Vote Date: 3/17/2023

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/27/2023

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Transportation Committee

REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR PURSUANT TO JOINT RULE 9

REASONS FOR BILL:

Studies play an important role in constructing public policy, to create a better and more reliable transportation system within the state of Connecticut and studying the consolidation of metropolitan planning organizations can aide in accomplishing this.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None Expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Kate Rozen, Transportation Advocate

Supports this bill saying that Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) have great power and influence over the future of regional transportation especially in pursuing measures to reduce climate change and car accidents. She adds that the states MPO's should have increased engagement in low income, low English proficiency, and minority communities.

Emil H. Frankel, Former CTDOT Commissioner

Supports the bill saying that other than the Capitols region's MPO, the states MPOs are too small, inadequately resourced, and geographically constrained which hinders them in carrying out responsibilities and properly prioritize investments in infrastructure improvements. They state that there should be no more than 3 MPOs in the state and the current institutional fragmentation inhibits the ability of MPOs to carry out adequate investment planning and effective decision making.

Jennifer Johnson

Supports this bill stating that if we don't consolidate the states MPOs and in doing so fix the region's transportation planning boundaries that we will compromise the futures of many cities and towns by denying them the opportunity to secure funds for the organization and management of regional transportation projects.

Patrick Hulin, Policy Director for the Governor's Office

Supports this bill stating that the study will consider what the minimum population to be represented by an MPO should be, which MPOs should be consolidated, the possible benefits of consolidating MPOs, barriers that may be encountered during the consolidation of MPOs, what state resources could counter those barriers, transitional planning for staff and funding needs for MPOs that should be merged, and conclusions drawn from the configuration of MPOs in other states.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Matthew Fulda, Executive Director of Metro COG

Opposes this bill saying that it's unclear why legislation is needed to address the perceived issues expressed by the bill. He also raised several concerns including preemption of federal law, inconsistency with congressional intent, misunderstanding the purpose of and function of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), lack of consideration for existing initiatives, adverse impacts on planning, and the assumption that the state's transportation planning requires this kind of assistance.

Reported by: Nathan Vieira

Date: 3/30/2023