
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 281

AN ACT CONCERNING PROPOSED FARE AND SERVICE CHANGES TO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Department of Transportation (DOT), whenever it must hold a public hearing on a proposed major service change to commuter rail service according to federal requirements (see BACKGROUND), to provide notice of the hearing to the (1) chairpersons and ranking members of the Transportation and Finance, Revenue and Bonding committees and (2) Connecticut Public Transportation Council (see BACKGROUND). The department must do so at least 15 days before the hearing.

Existing law requires DOT to provide notice of public hearings related to fare changes for mass transportation by land to these legislative committee leaders. The bill additionally requires it to provide this notice (1) at least 15 days before a hearing and (2) to the Connecticut Public Transportation Council.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

BACKGROUND

Connecticut Public Transportation Council

By law, the 15-member Connecticut Public Transportation Council is charged with studying and investigating all aspects of the daily operation of commuter railroad systems and state-funded public transit services (e.g., bus transit), monitoring their performance, and recommending changes to improve their efficiency, equity, and quality. The council serves as an advocate for customers of all commuter railroad systems and state-funded public transit services (CGS §§ 13b-212b & -212c).

Major Service Changes to Commuter Rail Service

Pursuant to federal requirements, DOT generally conducts a Service and Fare Equity (SAFE) analysis any time fare changes or major service changes are proposed to ensure that the changes do not unfairly impact minority and low-income populations (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Federal Transit Administration Circular 4702.1B). According to DOT’s Public Involvement Procedures, it conducts comprehensive community outreach to give the public opportunities to provide input and alternatives or request clarification; this may include a combination of public hearings and community-based organization meetings.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Transportation Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 36 Nay 0 (03/18/2024)