

Transportation Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-278

AN ACT CONCERNING ACCOUNTABILITY FOR THE EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS RECEIVED PURSUANT TO THE FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Title: INVESTMENT AND JOBS ACT.

Vote Date: 3/20/2024

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/4/2024

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Joint Committee on Transportation

REASONS FOR BILL:

The Department of Transportation (DOT) has numerous projects to oversee. Because of this, this bill asks for the DOT to generate quarterly reports, a place to locate those reports, as well as periodic updates to aid in providing more DOT with the opportunity to be more collaborative with the legislative committees that have cognizance with matters involving transportation and finance & bonding.

PROPOSED LANGUAGE CHANGES:

Rewrite in its entirety. Section 1a adjusts the deadline and subsequent timeframe for the Commissioner to submit a report to the joint standing committees of the general assembly having cognizance of matters relating to transportation, finance, revenue, and bonding. The scope of the report is outlined. Section 1b establishes the deadline for the establishment of a web site page for the Department of transportation which shall include information concerning the department's capital projects identified in the latest five-year transportation capital plans, which shall be updated quarterly. The minimum required information is outlined.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Garrett Eucalitto, Commissioner, CT Department of Transportation (CTDOT)

Provided testimony in opposition to the bill. The federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) provided increased funds for Connecticut and provides the entire federal portion of

funding for the CTDOT Capital Program. This bill would require additional oversight on CTDOT's spending of IIJA funds, which will make the transportation administrative process unnecessarily complex, increase costs and delays in the state's transportation construction, and add redundant transparency measures that already exist. Section 1 would require the Office and Policy Management to submit a report concerning the receipt and expenditure of IIJA funds received by the state, however because funding is agreed upon on a per-project basis, the reporting mechanism is inconsistent with the federal funding process. Further, the bill as written does not align with the process outlined by the USDOT in the Stewardship and Oversight Agreement, which outlines the roles and responsibilities of CTDOT in management of IIJA funds. Requiring committees of cognizance to be made aware of all changes to federal funding would result in an overbearing number of daily notifications.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Don Shubert, President, Connecticut Construction Industries Association (CCIA)

Provided testimony in support of the bill in hopes that it will promote efficient use of IIJA funding for necessary project development. CCIA has been concerned that CTDOT's use of funding has not been spent efficiently, which would be alleviated by the requirement for the DOT to report such funding. Research shows that Connecticut ranks last in terms of spending out of funds for new projects made in the first two years of the IIJA and has reimbursed a miniscule amount of those funds. The reporting requirements would help CCIA analyze why this is the case. CCIA further proposes amending the bill to include the state and federal funding which was supplanted by IIJA funding, as well to expand the report and internet website to include data on the reprogramming of previously programmed funding to provide a more complete representation of overall transportation expenditures.

Christopher Davis, Vice President, Public Policy, Connecticut Business and Industry Association (CBIA)

Provided testimony in support of the bill. CBIA believes the IIJA presents a great opportunity for Connecticut to invest in transportation infrastructure. Greater transparency into how these funds is spent allows CBIA and the public at large to gauge how effectively the funds are being spent.

Kimberly Glassman, Director, Foundation for Fair Contracting (FFC)

Provided testimony in support of the bill. They further suggest the bill expand its scope beyond the CTDOT and be amended to require the reporting of all state and public agencies expected to receive federal funds pursuant to the IIJA. Greater oversight and accountability may make processes more efficient, which is especially important when attempting to modernize the states aging transportation and energy systems.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

No further testimony was offered in opposition.

Reported by: Garrett Smith

Date: 4/3/24

