

Testimony of Commissioner Joseph Giulietti
Appropriations Committee
Fiscal Year 2021 Midterm Operating Budget
February 14, 2020 1:30 p.m.
Legislative Office Building, Hearing Room 2C

Good afternoon Chairwoman Osten, Chairwoman Walker, and members of the Committee. I am Joseph Giulietti, Commissioner of the Department of Transportation. I am pleased to appear before you today to discuss Governor Ned Lamont's recommended fiscal year 2021 midterm operating budget for the Department of Transportation.

Governor Lamont's midterm budget continues to recognize how critical transportation is to the long-term economic vitality and future success of our state. The proposed funding will enable the Department to continue to provide the citizens of Connecticut with a safe and efficient intermodal transportation network. And, in order to ensure that long-term infrastructure maintenance and upgrades are adequately funded, the Governor's recommendations for truck tolling on bridges, along with proposed utilization of various federal loan programs, will help set the stage for a sustainable path forward.

The Governor's recommended FY 2021 Special Transportation Fund appropriations of \$728.9 million include proposed adjustments to three Department operating budget line items, compared to the levels enacted in Public Act 19-117.

The Governor's proposed Personal Services budget of \$194.2 million provides funding for Department employees that plan, design, maintain, and provide support for a safe highway and bridge and public transportation system. The proposed authorized count of 3363 reflects a reduction of 24 positions that will transfer to the Department of Administrative Services and the Office of Policy and Management, as part of the Governor's initiative to centralize human resources functions.

The Governor's proposed Other Expenses appropriation of \$52.8 million includes a *decrease* that accounts for the transfer of funding to DAS for the centralization of the State's Microsoft agreement; and an *increase* to reflect the rising unit price of Liquid Magnesium Chlorides used for snow removal. It is important to note that the Department's Other Expenses account contains funding dedicated to safety-related fixed costs, including snow removal; fleet repairs and fuel; highway and electrical items (such as guide rail, posts, concrete barriers and lights); highway illumination; and the costs for operating more than 500 Department buildings including administrative facilities, garages, salt storage sheds, rest areas and other structures.

A key component of the Department's mission is maintaining existing rail and transit services that serve the mobility needs of over 80 million passengers annually. These services, along with the ADA Paratransit Program, represent approximately 63 percent of the Department's operating budget. The Governor's budget recommendations keep funding for these appropriations at the levels enacted last spring. In the Bus Operations appropriation of \$199.2 million, a reduction of \$2.3 million is reflected to offset revenue collected by the U-Pass program.

I look forward to working with you on implementing a budget that allows for continued preservation and operation of the state's transportation network.

I will gladly respond to your questions.