



Merritt Parkway
Conservancy
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March 8, 2021

Re: Senate Bill No. 982

Chairman Lemar, Vice Chairmen Cassano and Simms, Ranking Members Somers and Carney, and members of the Transportation Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on Senate Bill No. 982 on behalf of the Merritt Parkway Conservancy, a private non-profit organization committed to the preservation, revitalization and stewardship of the Merritt and community member of CT DOT's Merritt Parkway Advisory Committee.

The Merritt Parkway Conservancy strongly opposes repeal and substitution of subsection (f) of section 13a-26 of the general statutes.

The existing statute currently waives restrictions on the occasional use of service buses measuring no more than 8' high, 7' wide and 17' long. This size is at the outer border of vehicles safe to operate on the parkways. The proposed substitution would waive restrictions on two classes of much larger service busses, class A being 10' high, 8' wide and 24' long, and class B being 9' high, 6.5' wide and 19' long. These new classes are too large in scale for the parkway and should not be permitted to operate .

The parkways' physical construction is not currently engineered for these classes in moving traffic. Sightlines of other drivers will be obscured by vehicles of such large heights, width and lengths. These vehicles are too long to safely enter and exit the short and tightly curved ramps. Vehicles of these heights and widths will not fully clear some bridges at the edge of the shoulder. Should a vehicle this size need to pull over, it will crowd the recently widened breakdown lanes and impede traffic in the travel lanes.

The State has made a substantial investment in rehabilitating and upgrading the Merritt Parkway for the safe operation of the classes of vehicles currently permitted. Enacting this measure will have unintended fiscal impacts, for it will necessitate additional safety measures and physical upgrades, including revisiting recently completed work, to re-size and re-shape the parkway for larger, wider and longer vehicles.

These vehicles do not fit our parkways. Please keep subsection (f) as enacted and omit this substitution from the bill.

Sincerely,

Wes Haynes
Executive Director