



State of Connecticut

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

STATE CAPITOL

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

Appropriations Committee

Testimony in Support of: Expanded Rail Service on the Waterbury Branch Line

February 26, 2021

Chairmen Osten and Walker, Ranking Members Miner and France, and Distinguished Members of the Appropriations Committee, we write to you today in strong support of expanded rail service for the Waterbury Branch Line as it is outlined in the Governor's Proposed FY 2022-2023 Budget for Transportation, Judicial & Corrections, and Legislative Agencies.

This crucial expansion project will greatly improve the economic viability and overall attractiveness of the Naugatuck Valley and the surrounding communities. The expanded rail service will help us to usher in new businesses and opportunities, and to provide better transportation services, safety and security to our residents.

The Department of Transportation and Metro-North Railroad will be undertaking a capital improvement program for the Waterbury Branch Line to provide capacity for additional train service, improve service reliability and to meet the Federal requirements for positive train control (PTC). These systems are important to help prevent train-top-train collisions, over-speed derailments, incursions into established work zones, and movements of trains through switches that have been left in the wrong position. Specifically, this work includes signal and communications upgrades, track improvements, rail siding installation (to allow trains to pass), and bridge repairs to three major rail bridges in Derby, Seymour, and Naugatuck.

The Department of Transportation anticipates this work to be complete by the end of 2021. The incremental cost of expanding commuter and intercity passenger rail service is eligible for Federal Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funds at 80%. The funding outlined in the Governor's budget represents the state's share and would provide funding of \$1,227,689 in FY 23 to leverage the completion of capital projects on the Waterbury Branch Line by increasing the number of trains servicing the line from 15 to 22 on weekdays and from 12 to 15 on weekends.

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It is our hope that the Committee will take this crucial project and its importance for our states future into consideration and vote favorably on this proposal.

Sincerely,



Nicole Klarides-Ditria
State Representative
105th District



David Labriola
State Representative
131st District



Rosa Rebimbas
State Representative
70th District