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State of Connecticut
SENATE

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER PRO TEMPORE

RANKING MEMBER
ENERGY & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
EXEC. & LEGIS. NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

MEMBER
FINANCE, REVENUE & BONDING COMMITTEE

Testimony

Appropriations Committee Public Hearing

March 26, 2021

In Support of

S.B. 163 – An Act Concerning the Legislative Transportation Allowance

S.B. 615 - An Act Concerning Payments in Lieu of Taxes to the City of New London for the Connecticut Port Authority Property

Chairmen Osten and Walker and Ranking Members Miner and France, I am speaking to you today in support of two bills.

Firstly, I want to thank you for bringing S.B. 163, An Act Concerning the Legislative Transportation Allowance, to a public hearing. This measure is one I have proposed a number of times in an effort to put every possible opportunity for savings on the table. Currently, mileage payments are made to legislators as income, which then gets included into the calculation of pension payments for eligible legislators.

Salaries that include mileage payments create an undetermined amount of money added to legislative pensions and makes it impossible to predict what the state pension obligations will be.

To remedy this situation I am proposing two changes:

1. Pay our mileage to legislators as reimbursements, not as salary which I believe is more appropriate and more closely follows the intent of the payment.
2. This would ensure that we would pay mileage to those legislators who actually drive into Hartford.

The legislature should be leading by example. Legislators should take proper responsibility for the miles they are or are not actually driving, and whether it is salary or reimbursement, members should not receive payments for miles when they are passengers in a carpooling situation.

Secondly, thank you for taking up S.B. 615 - An Act Concerning Payments in Lieu of Taxes to the City of New London for the Connecticut Port Authority Property. This bill enforces the proper payment to the City of New

London as the host city for the Connecticut Port Authority. This quasi state agency manages a large piece of valuable costal property, including the newly-acquired State Pier. The city loses a large amount of potential tax revenue with a public asset occupying coveted real estate and should not be forced to shoulder the financial burden of that loss without state aid.

The proposed \$400 thousand number is an estimated value for the State Pier as improved.

The time is long overdue for the legislature to put proper focus on the City of New London. As we embark on the economic recovery from the pandemic and establishing the infrastructure to harness wind energy in Long Island Sound, this is an acceptable way to make our host city whole.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge you to support Senate Bills 163 and 615.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Formica', enclosed within a large, loopy oval shape.

Paul M. Formica
State Senator, 20th District