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5TH DISTRICT, CONNECTICUT

COMMITTEE ON
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COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0705

January 6, 2010

State Bond Commission
Office of Policy and Management (OPM)
450 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106-1379

Dear Commission Members,

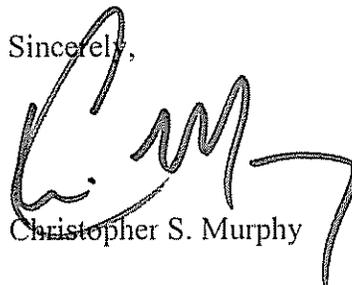
I am writing to urge your support for the New Haven – Hartford – Springfield (NHHS) commuter rail line bond issue to be considered at your January 8 meeting.

As you know, the \$26 million on the Commission's agenda will be used to conduct further design, environmental assessment, and construction activities on the existing rail line, better equipping it to accommodate daily commuter service. Currently, the 58-mile Amtrak-owned and operated NHHS line only offers a schedule of 12 daily passenger trips, limiting its value as a commuter rail corridor on par with the highly-traveled New Haven and Shoreline East lines operated by MetroNorth. With increasingly severe chronic vehicle congestion clogging the vital I-84 and I-91 corridors through central Connecticut and into Massachusetts, expanding commuter service on the line would provide an important new source of reliable, environmentally-friendly public transportation.

Additionally, ConnDOT has applied for funding through the intercity high-speed passenger rail grants provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and administered by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). However, significant engineering and survey work on the line must be completed before construction can begin. By authorizing these important bond funds, the state can firmly and clearly demonstrate its continued commitment to the NHHS commuter line and ensure serious consideration by federal grantmakers as this project moves from design to reality.

I appreciate your consideration of this important request, and your continued service to our state. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Christopher S. Murphy