

1999 CPTC ANNUAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION RESPONSES

1. THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THAT CONNDOT PURSUE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUTER RAIL SERVICE BETWEEN NEW HAVEN, HARTFORD AND SPRINGFIELD TO MEET THE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS OF COMMUTERS AND OTHER TRAVELERS IN CONNECTICUT'S CENTRAL CORRIDOR WHICH ARE NOT BEING MET BY THE CURRENT AMTRAK SERVICE.

DEPARTMENT RESPONSE:

In May of 1994 the Department completed a study titled FEASIBILITY EVALUATION OF COMMUTER RAIL SERVICE ALONG THE NEW HAVEN – HARTFORD CORRIDOR. This study concluded, “that rail commuter service in the New Haven – Hartford corridor is feasible. However, funding for the capital and operating costs of the proposed demonstration service is not presently available.” Further it was recommended that “the next level of analysis be undertaken.” Prior to taking further action Section 21 of PA 95-318 established the legislative Task Force on Rail Services. The Task Force was charged with studying the feasibility of implementing rail service between Hartford and New Haven. The Task Force issued its Final Report in February 1996. The report recommended that the Transportation Committee direct the Department “to prepare detailed cost estimates, refine ridership estimates and complete the engineering and environmental assessments necessary to implement the next phase of New Haven – Hartford rail service.” The Task Force further recommended “that the General Assembly appropriate sufficient resources in the DOT budget to complete these objectives. The CPTC also urges the General Assembly to consider funding for Springfield Line commuter service, recognizing that the Department does not have the budgetary resources to incorporate a major new service without significant service cuts elsewhere.

The Department does not intend to pursue this issue further without the legislative direction and budgetary support recommended by the Task Force and the Commission.