

Statement of Joseph R. Sculley
President
Motor Transport Association of Connecticut
Before
The Transportation Committee
February 15, 2017
Re: SB 303, SB 501, HB 6060, HB 7055

Chairmen Guerrero, Leone, Boucher, and Ranking Member Carney, thank you for this opportunity to testify today. I am Joe Sculley, President of Motor Transport Association of Connecticut (MTAC). MTAC represents trucking companies, as well as businesses that happen to operate commercial trucks in conjunction with their primary line of business. I would like to speak briefly on a few of the issues on today's agenda.

***H.B. 7055 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION REGARDING.... HEAVY DUTY TRAILERS AND FLASHING LIGHTS ON MOTOR VEHICLES.**

MTAC has been working with Conn DOT to make positive changes to the permitting and transportation of oversize and overweight loads in Connecticut. Section 9 of this bill is a part of those discussions, and we support the goal of this change.

Most MTAC members that use the annual permits transport overweight or oversized indivisible loads, such as construction equipment used for pavement milling, grading, force feed loads, and more. Those are just some examples, there are many more loads that require oversize and overweight permits.

This change will ultimately result in benefits to the construction contractors and subcontractors who use the permits, as well as customers who benefit from their work, in both the public sector and private sector.

H.B. 6060 AN ACT CREATING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY ALTERNATIVE FUNDING SOURCES FOR REST AREAS ON STATE HIGHWAYS

MTAC applauds and supports this bill, because it addresses a lesser-known issue for interstate commercial truck drivers: safe parking. Truck drivers need safe, legal places to park their trucks



in order to comply with federal mandates regarding rest and sleep breaks. There is a nationwide shortage of available truck parking, and CT is at the top of that list.

While MTAC suggests that one or two adjustments could be made to Governor Malloy's budget proposal to preserve state funding for rest areas, we appreciate this effort. MTAC would be pleased to assist the Task Force in any way, or would also be available to serve on the Task Force, if private sector representation is requested. If it is somehow not possible to find state funds that can be used to provide safe parking for the drivers who move America's goods, perhaps CT can be a leader in finding an innovative solution to this issue.

S.B. 501 AN ACT CONCERNING THE CONSTRUCTION OF TUNNELS FOR INTERSTATE ROUTES 84 AND 91 IN THE HARTFORD REGION

MTAC recently met with Congressman Larson to discuss this proposal, and we commend the Congressman for presenting a thoughtful approach to a major infrastructure project in Hartford.

As truckers, our chief concern regarding interstate highways is the function of the road. The safety of all motorists, and congestion relief, must be addressed. Congestion is a huge burden on interstate commerce and the broader economy, and as such, relieving it must be a major factor in any and all highway projects. A review of preliminary materials presented by Congressman Larson and his staff suggest that his approach could indeed result in congestion relief.

The American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI) states that congestion costs the U.S. economy more than \$49 billion per year. In a related study, ATRI recently released their top 100 freight bottlenecks in the U.S. The I-84 / I-91 interchange was Connecticut's first location on the list, which was the 24th most congested freight bottleneck in the country. MTAC does not believe that the current replacement plan for the I-84 Hartford viaduct would do much, if anything, to relieve congestion at the current 84/91 interchange. It is very possible that Congressman Larson's proposal could result in congestion relief.

If this plan were to go forward, MTAC would want to ensure that hazmat transportation is not disadvantaged. MTAC has many member companies who deliver gasoline to gas stations all over New England, and home heating fuel to homes all over New England. Accordingly, the trucks operated by these businesses are often "through traffic" on Interstates 84 and 91. MTAC requests that accommodations would have to be made for these carriers who depend on the highways in order to reach their customers.

The cost of this project is sure to be a major factor in how or if it proceeds. Multiple reports have estimated that the cost of this tunnel proposal would be about \$10 billion, although MTAC has not reviewed any documents that go into detail on that estimate.

SB 303: AN ACT CONCERNING RESTRICTIONS ON THE TRANSPORT OF MOBILE AND MODULAR HOMES

MTAC is not sure how this bill would positively impact the Connecticut economy. MTAC has not heard from any members that have been disadvantaged by the current process for transporting modular homes in (or through) Connecticut. We are not aware of any other significant stakeholder community in Connecticut that is disadvantaged by the way mobile and modular homes are currently transported.

MTAC suggests that the rules for transporting oversize and overweight loads be improved before addressing the transportation of modular homes. MTAC members transport oversize and overweight loads, within, into, and out of, Connecticut. Improving changes to this system will have benefits to the Connecticut economy.