

Re: SB 713 AN ACT CONCERNING OPEN REST AREAS

MTAC Supports

Chairman Leone, Chairman Lemar, Ranking Member Martin, Ranking Member Devlin, and Transportation Committee members, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 713. I am Joe Sculley, President of Motor Transport Association of Connecticut (MTAC).

I would like to thank Senator Osten for introducing this legislation which was ultimately referred to the Transportation Committee.

TRUCKERS TAKE BREAKS AT ALL TIMES OF THE DAY

Funding has been cut so that the rest areas are only staffed from 8:30am to 3:30pm. The buildings are locked at all other times, and there is no staff around. However, truck drivers need to take breaks at all hours of the day in order to comply with federal Hours of Service regulations. Full funding for state-owned rest areas so that they are all staffed 24 hours per day is important for the trucking industry.

For reference, current Hours of Service regulations mandate that a 30-minute rest break be taken within the first 8 hours of driving time. Secondly, a driver may not drive beyond the 14th consecutive hour after coming on duty – meaning that they must take 10 hours off. During this time they will go into their sleeper cab. Since each driver for each company can start their driving time at various times of the day, that leads to a constant demand for safe truck parking spaces.

CT HAS SEVERE SHORTAGE OF SAFE TRUCK PARKING

It can often be difficult to find safe and legal parking spaces because Connecticut has been identified by a Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) study as having a severe shortage of safe parking.

https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight/infrastructure/truck_parking/jasons_law/truckparkingsurvey/ch5.htm

“Among the States reporting the most severe challenges are New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York, Virginia, Maryland, South Carolina, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, California, Washington, and Oregon.”

The FHWA study was mandated as a part of “Jason’s law,” a federal law which was named after truck driver Jason Rivenburg, who was killed because he was forced to park at an abandoned gas station to wait to deliver his load because there was no other parking available. His killer robbed him for the seven dollars he had in his pocket.



Connecticut should do everything it can to ensure the safety and security of truck drivers operating in our state. When truckers pull in to state-owned rest areas because they have to in order to comply with Hours of Service regulations, they should at least be assured that they can access restroom facilities and a parking lot where they can sleep in peace.

REST AREA FUNDING IS <1% OF STF BUDGET

At the time the funding for rest areas was cut, news reports stated that it would save the state \$2 million per year. The STF was appropriated \$1.62 billion for this fiscal year. Therefore, \$2 million is 0.1% of the STF budget. It is hard to see any argument that the state does not have the money to fund rest areas, especially when empty transit buses are operated in the state with no questions asked. There is not a demand for many of these buses, however, this is a demand for open, safe, clean rest areas.

The trucking industry is a heavy funder of the Special Transportation Fund. Out-of-state truckers who are most likely to need the rest areas do in fact contribute taxes and fees to Connecticut's STF as well. Out of state trucks do not travel in Connecticut for free. Connecticut gets about \$25 to \$30 million annually in tax and fee revenue from out-of-state trucks.

Additionally, recent reports from the Office of Policy and Management and the Office of the State Controller both show that the Special Transportation Fund is taking in more money than expected, and that hundreds of millions of dollars are expected to remain at the conclusion of this fiscal year.

Connecticut can show that the state has respect for all truck drivers – wherever they are based – who do a difficult job of moving our nation's freight, and fully fund these rest areas. We need to make our drivers feel welcome and safe when they take their mandated breaks.

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ABOUT CT TRUCKING INDUSTRY:

85.8%: number of Connecticut communities that depend exclusively on trucks to move their goods

94%: percent of manufactured tonnage transported by truck in Connecticut

\$3.2 billion: total trucking industry wages paid in Connecticut (2017)

58,400: trucking industry jobs in Connecticut (2017)

\$53,3500: average annual salary in Connecticut (2017)

\$8,610: average annual CT-imposed highway user fees paid by tractor trailers (as of 4/1/2018)

\$8,906: average annual fed-imposed highway user fees paid by tractor trailers (as of 4/1/2018)