



**Betsy Gara**  
**Executive Director**  
**Connecticut Council of Small Towns**  
**Before the Appropriations Committee**  
**March 15, 2024**

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) **supports HB-5006 – AN ACT RESTORING FUNDING TO THE SHORE LINE EAST RAIL LINE.**

HB-5006 calls for sufficient funds to support the Shore Line East Rail Line.

Strengthening and expanding rail service is vital to supporting Transit-Oriented Development that creates more livable, walkable communities. Expanded rail service and other transportation networks also enhance tourism opportunities, generating much-needed tax revenues and spending in local businesses to support our state and local economies.

In addition, reliable, affordable rail service can also help address barriers to employment that individuals face by providing individuals with a convenient, cost-effective way to get to and from work. Given the workforce needs of many of our local businesses, addressing barriers to employment, such as transportation, is important.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of the bill.

*COST is an advocacy organization committed to giving small towns a strong voice in the legislative process. COST champions the major policy needs and concerns of Connecticut's suburban and rural towns.*