
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 7059

AN ACT STUDYING THE DANBURY BRANCH LINE OF THE METRO-NORTH COMMUTER RAILROAD AND CONCERNING THE CONNECTICUT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Department of Transportation (DOT) commissioner to study the feasibility of operating hybrid trains on Metro-North Railroad's Danbury Branch line and expanding it to include New Milford. The bill requires him to report the study's results and any recommendations to the Transportation Committee by February 1, 2026.

Separately, the bill requires the Connecticut Public Transportation Council to prepare its budget, if any, and submit budgetary requests to DOT. The department must include these requests in the estimate of needed expenditures that existing law requires budgeted agencies to biennially submit to the Office of Policy and Management and the legislature. The bill also requires DOT to create a separate webpage for the council on its website that includes the council's meeting schedule, agendas, minutes, reports, resources, and any other information the council submits.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except the transportation council provisions are effective July 1, 2025.

BACKGROUND

Connecticut Public Transportation Council

By law, the 15-member Connecticut Public Transportation Council is charged with studying and investigating all aspects of the daily operation of commuter railroad systems and state-funded public transit services (e.g., bus transit), monitoring their performance, and recommending changes to improve their efficiency, equity, and quality.

The council serves as an advocate for customers of all commuter railroad systems and state-funded public transit services (CGS §§ 13b-212b & -212c).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Transportation Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 35 Nay 0 (03/12/2025)