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*A United Voice for Public
Transportation in Connecticut*

Connecticut Transportation Updates

URGENT: \$1 Million Proposed Cut for TEIP Funding

The proposed budget cuts \$1 million in the DSS budget under the Transportation for Employment Independence Program (TEIP). This funding would impact bus service on the Coastal Link along with other transit districts who provide transit under this funding. This bus service reduction disproportionately affects those very people who rely on public transportation. Electronic testimony for the Appropriations Committee will be accepted either in Word or PDF format via email at appropriationtestimo@cga.ct.gov between Feb. 11 and Feb. 19th. CACT will be submitting testimony to restore this funding.



Employment Law Workshop A Success

CACT Chairman Jonathan Rubell introduced Attorneys Lorraine Cortese-Costa and Joshua Wyatt at CACT's first 2014 Training Workshop on "Employment Law" held on January 16 at the Greater Hartford Transit District. The training educated employers on the various laws and union contract provisions that come into play when making decisions as to discipline and/or discharge of employees and best practices for avoiding challenges and adverse outcomes in arbitration, administrative proceedings and court. Lorraine talked about issues involving employees whose job performance and/or qualification may be limited due to a medical condition and what the employer's legal obligations are in those situations. Audience members related their own stories of employee issues and how they dealt with them, along with asking questions about the best ways to handle individual situations. At the end, Wage and Hour laws specific to Connecticut were covered.

February 20th - Annual Legislative Breakfast

On Thursday, February 20, CACT and WTS will be co-sponsoring our Annual Legislative Breakfast in the Old Judiciary Room at the State Capitol. DOT Commissioner Jim Redeker will be the keynote speaker, articulating his core values for DOT and the progress made in 2013 along with an update on the budget.

Registration is encouraged and attendees can send an email registration with their name, phone number, employer and email address to: mary.cact@yahoo.com.

Registration is at 8:30 am, the event runs from 9:00 – 10:00 am. Mark your calendars!

Be sure to contact your legislator(s) and invite them to attend this important event.



CACT Member Highlight

Joseph Comerford – Executive Director, Estuary Transit District

Joe started at UCONN Transportation Services as a bus washer, since he was too young for a CDL at the start of his freshman year. As soon as he turned 18, he began driving buses on the campus. While he was earning a bachelor’s degree in business administration at the university, he worked his way up to operations manager.

First Transit hired Joe upon his graduation, entering him into their management associate program. After about a year of working at various transit systems throughout the country managed by First Transit, he ended up at the Monroe Transit System as General Manager. During his five years in that role, he was able to introduce a new branding of the system, add night service and realign routes to better serve the city. These efforts, combined with a campaign to replace the entire fleet of buses, resulted in a doubling of ridership.

In 2009, Joe decided to return to Connecticut when offered an opportunity to serve as Executive Director of the Estuary Transit District (ETD). During the five years since, he has overseen a significant expansion of service, the addition of two towns to the service area and ridership growth of 85%. The district was also recognized as the CTAA Rural System of the Year in 2011.

CACT Member Highlights

If you or a staff member would like to be featured in an upcoming issue, please send your bio and a jpeg photo to Mary Tomolonius at mary.cact@yahoo.com.

Advertising in the CACT Newsletter

The rates are full page \$300; ½ page \$150; and ¼ page \$100. CACT members receive a 10% discount. All ads must be submitted prior to the last week of the month to mary.cact@yahoo.com.

New GBT Bus Routes

At the end of January, GBT introduced a new weekday Route 20 bus route that will provide service into Monroe to Stepney Center. They also announced changes to other routes based on input received from their customers. For further info, go to their website www.gogbt.com or email info@gogbt.com.

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“We applaud Orlando’s vision and support for an efficient, reliable and connected transportation network that gives thousands of hard-working families greater access to jobs and other opportunities,”

-Deputy Federal
Transit Admin.
Therese McMillan
Commenting on the nearly
completed East-West Circulator
Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project
in downtown Orlando

ACTION Training Session & ADA Questions Conference

United We Ride is offering a free online course on the fundamentals of Travel Training Administration beginning on May 12. The registration deadline is May 7. For further information you can contact Course Instructor Kristi McLaughlin at 800-659-6428.

A “Frequently Asked Questions on the ADA: Fixed Route and ADA Paratransit” online conference is being held on Feb. 26th. To register: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/FAQontheADA>

Calendar

Tuesday, Feb. 18’ 7:30 p.m. Metro-North Riders SPEAK OUT, Pequot Library, 720 Pequot Avenue, Southport, CT. Com. Redeker will listen to comments and concerns and answer questions. Connecticut Citizens’ Transportation Lobby (CCTL), and its supporting organizations are hosting this event.

Thursday, Feb. 20, 8:30 am, CACT & WTS Annual Legislative Breakfast, Old Judiciary Room at the State Capitol.

Tuesday, Feb. 25, 6 pm, ITBD building at 185 Main Street in New Britain. Learn about a proposed new affordable housing project in downtown New Britain. A short presentation will be followed by Q & A. The meeting is being organized by the Housing Committee of the Mayor’s Plan to End Homelessness.

Tuesday, Feb. 25, 6 pm, The Lyceum Resource & Conference Center, 227 Lawrence St, Hartford. Transform CT Public Open House Meetings. All invited.

Wednesday, Feb. 26, 7 pm, Housatonic Community College, Beacon Hall Events Center, 700 Lafayette St, Bridgeport. Transform CT Public Open House Meetings. All invited.

Thursday, Feb. 27, 6 pm, Public Library of New London, 63 Huntington St, New London. Transform CT Public Open House Meetings. All invited.

“...America THINKS 2014 Mobility Survey that shows overwhelming support for transportation infrastructure funding. 95% of respondents think it's important to rebuild the physical infrastructure of our nation's transportation system so that it survives increasingly intense weather patterns such as last week's storms in Atlanta....”

-Center for Transportation Excellence