

WTS CT LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

NEWSLETTER



2026 TRANSPORTATION LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS

Welcome to the inaugural newsletter of the WTS Connecticut Legislative Affairs Committee. This newsletter is being launched as part of our effort to strengthen awareness and engagement among WTS members on transportation policy developments that impact our industry, communities, and profession.

Transportation policy plays a critical role in shaping the systems we plan, design, build, and operate every day. Decisions made during the legislative session influence infrastructure investment, safety regulations, transit operations, emerging technologies, and workforce development across Connecticut. For many professionals

in the transportation sector, however, legislative activity can be difficult to track amid busy professional responsibilities.

The goal of this newsletter is to serve as a bridge between the legislative process and our membership, providing timely updates on transportation-related proposals, policy discussions, and initiatives under consideration at the State Capitol. By highlighting key legislative items, we hope to equip WTS members with a clearer understanding of how policy decisions intersect with the transportation field and the work we do across the state.

SESSION RECAP & JUNE REVIEW

The featured items in this edition focus on State Legislation as the spring session comes to a close, highlighting key developments and outcomes from this cycle.

At our June event, we will take a closer look at what took place in the Transportation Committee this year, including major decisions, challenges, and what these developments mean moving forward.



RECKLESS DRIVING AND DISTRACTED DRIVING MODERNIZATION

This proposal modernizes Connecticut’s existing distracted driving laws to reflect evolving vehicle technology and roadway safety needs.

Key provisions include:

- Updating the state’s 2005 hands-free cell phone law to prohibit video converters that allow drivers to play video entertainment through vehicle screens.
- Classifying the use of prohibited electronic devices (including cell phones) within work zones as a reckless driving offense.
- Prohibiting the sale or transfer of video converter devices within Connecticut.

Why it matters:

These changes address new forms of distracted driving and provide stronger protection for roadway workers and motorists.



ZERO-EMISSION BUSES, EV PARKING, AND CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE



Why it matters:

These updates support Connecticut’s climate goals while ensuring transit reliability and more efficient use of EV infrastructure.

This legislation supports Connecticut’s transition to a cleaner transportation system while maintaining reliable public transit services.

Key provisions include:

- Providing flexibility for CTDOT to transition public bus fleets to zero-emission vehicles without requiring reductions in existing transit service.
- Allowing electric and hybrid vehicle owners—particularly long-distance commuters—to park in public EV spaces even without actively charging, helping maximize available parking capacity.
- Updating EV parking space mandates to create future flexibility to adjust requirements based on market conditions and EV adoption rates.

UTILITY LATERALS IN THE PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY

As infrastructure within public rights-of-way continues to age, this proposal clarifies responsibility for maintenance and repair of utility laterals.

Key provisions include:

- Establishing clear accountability for entities responsible for maintaining infrastructure located within public rights-of-way.
- Protecting homeowners by ensuring that ownership and liability responsibilities end at their property line.

Why it matters:

Clear responsibility for infrastructure maintenance reduces disputes, improves response times after infrastructure failures, and protects homeowners from unexpected liabilities.



FLEXIBLE LANES FOR CONGESTION MANAGEMENT

This proposal authorizes the use of flexible or dynamic part-time lanes on limited-access highways and major roadways to improve traffic flow and support transit operations.

Key provisions include:

- Allowing CTDOT to implement dynamic lanes that can change use depending on travel demand.
- Supporting projects such as the I-84 Danbury Flex Lane and MOVE! New Haven initiatives.
- Allowing municipalities to partner with CTDOT to enforce Bus Rapid Transit lanes through camera enforcement.

Why it matters:

Flexible Lane management can improve congestion, enhance transit reliability, and maximize the efficiency of existing roadway infrastructure.



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS



This proposal updates the way public notice is provided for proposed public transit fare changes.

Key provisions include:

- Allowing fare change notifications to be advertised in the specific regions affected rather than through statewide circulation.
- Maintaining public transparency and federal civil rights compliance while reducing unnecessary outreach costs.

Why it matters:

Modernizing notification practices keeps the public informed while ensuring taxpayer resources are used efficiently.

REPEALERS AND ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

This proposal includes several administrative adjustments to improve regulatory clarity.

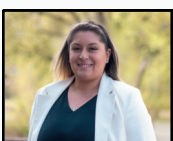
Key provisions include:

- Removing a previously designated memorial road naming at the request of the original legislative delegation.
- Ensuring Office of State Traffic Administration (OSTA) oversight for a planned development in East Hartford by removing an existing exemption from review.

Why it matters:

Administrative updates ensure transportation oversight processes remain consistent and transparent.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Legislative Affairs Committee to help out with events, future newsletters, and new ideas, please contact:



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