

LWVCT TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVES, 2007

Members of the League of Women Voters of Connecticut adopted transportation as one of the legislative priorities for the 2007 legislative session. On behalf of the 2,500 state-wide members and supporters of the League, we are pleased to submit our transportation and transportation-funding priorities for this session.

The League continues to believe that the principal goal of any transportation policy must be the reduction of all vehicular traffic on Connecticut's roads. We thank the Governor and the legislative leadership for recognizing the need to overhaul transportation by voting significant funding for improvements designed to make a start towards this goal. But, more needs to be done.

League members support and will advocate for the following initiatives:

Expanded schedules, capacity and incentives for intra-state mass transit users.

- To make mass transit more attractive to current and potential users, we need to increase the frequency of service on existing bus and railroad lines. This includes expanded commuter rail service on the Metro-North line, the Shoreline east of New Haven, the New Haven-Hartford-Springfield and the New London-Worcester lines. Additional and improved parking facilities will attract users.
- Increased bus and/or shuttle service within and between communities to improve access for employees to job centers. When planning for the bus/shuttle service, bus shelters for passengers and clear information as to the schedule need to be made available.
- Incentives for employers and employees to encourage the use of public transportation and flexible hours of employment.

Expanded freight traffic on existing rail lines, shipping of cargo via barges and incentives for users.

- Maximize the use of existing rails for freight by improving scheduling, eliminating surcharges, and improving access for shippers at origin and terminal points.
- Continue efforts to build a tunnel under the Hudson to provide a direct link for freight between points south and New England.
- Continue coordination with the NY-NJ Port Authority to obtain terminal space to allow cargo to move on water directly from New Jersey to Bridgeport's terminal facility.

Giving priority to maintenance of existing highways and bridges instead of new construction.

- DOT should conduct a survey of highways and bridges to determine the extent of maintenance needs statewide and create a prioritized multi-year plan to carry out the work.
- Prioritize efforts to find solution to eliminate specific congestion points along the major highways and propose solutions such a flexible use of highway lanes, congestion pricing and, as a last resort, expansion of on and off ramps.
- Upgrade existing highways instead of building new superhighways.

Expand efforts to promote safety on Connecticut's highways.

- Develop a highway safety program that includes measures such as increased surveillance and enforcement, including the expanded weigh stations hours.
- Expand the public education program targeting all types of drivers to promote safer driving.

LWVCT looks forward to working with the legislature on these important issues.

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