

Western Connecticut COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS



March 12, 2022

Esteemed Chairs Cassano and McCarthy Vahey,
Members of the Planning and Development Committee:

The Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG) appreciates the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill 393, *An Act Establishing a Pilot Program Delegating the Management of Small-Scale Transportation Projects to the Capitol Region Council of Governments*.

WestCOG **supports** the concept in this bill, namely of giving clear statutory authority for the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) to delegate additional responsibility on a for transportation improvements to the state's regional councils of governments (COGs).

With the unprecedented expansion of federal transportation funding that the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) represents, states will be able to expand and accelerate their transportation project pipelines – provided they have the capacity to do so. Given the wave of retirements sweeping the public sector and shortages of new talent, sharing of the workload will be needed if states are to deliver on the promise of IIJA.

As the Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP) has demonstrated, delegation can be effective and efficient, benefitting state and local government. SB 393 will provide CTDOT the option to delegate responsibilities that can be efficiently managed at a regional level to the COGs, reducing the burden on Department resources and freeing them to focus on programs and projects of statewide significance and priority. In doing so, the bill represents a common-sense extension and logical evolution of delegated authority to date.

WestCOG concurs with comments of the Capitol Region Council of Governments, that any arrangements for an expansion of delegated authority should be developed between CTDOT and the COGs, in our view, on a voluntary and mutually acceptable basis, and that such arrangements should be available to all regions.

Should you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Francis R. Pickering". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Francis R. Pickering,
Executive Director