

March 6, 2026

Esteemed Chairs Cohen and Berger-Girvalo,
Members of the Transportation Committee:

The Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG) appreciates the opportunity to comment in **support** of Section 2 of Raised Bill 5464, *An Act Implementing Recommendations from the Department of Transportation*, which modifies the state's transit bus procurement requirements to allow continued purchase of diesel-fueled transit buses while maintaining the state's long-term transition toward zero-emission vehicles. Specifically, this section removes the requirement that the state cease procuring diesel transit buses beginning in 2024 while retaining the requirement that at least 30% of buses purchased or leased by the state be zero-emission buses by 2030.

WestCOG supports the transition toward lower-emission transit fleets. At the same time, transportation policy must recognize operational realities and fiscal constraints faced by providers. Transit systems operate fleets that must function reliably across a wide range of service conditions. Restricting the technologies that transit agencies procure too quickly can create operational risks and increase system costs without necessarily producing the intended environmental benefits.

Fleet reliability, vehicle range, charging infrastructure, and maintenance capabilities affect the ability of transit providers to deliver dependable service. While zero-emission buses continue to improve, agencies operate routes with varying service patterns and operational requirements. Maintaining procurement flexibility allows agencies to deploy the most appropriate technologies while continuing to expand the use of lower-emission vehicles where they are most effective.

Reliable and financially sustainable transit service is also important to the overall performance of the transportation system. Public transit reduces pressure on the highway network by providing mobility alternatives that reduce automobile travel, vehicle emissions, and traffic congestion. Policies that unintentionally increase transit costs or constrain fleet operations could undermine these broader transportation system goals.

Section 2 balances these considerations by preserving the state's long-term commitment to zero-emission transit vehicles while allowing transit agencies the flexibility needed to maintain reliable service and manage costs effectively. For these reasons, WestCOG respectfully supports Section 2.

Sincerely,



Francis R. Pickering
Executive Director