

## House Republican Press Release

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### Funds to Save Maybrook Freight Line Don't Come



### *Serious Disrepair Jeopardized Rail Line's Future*

**HARTFORD-** State Representative Larry Miller (R-122) today expressed dismay that \$11.2 million in bonding that he had hoped to secure in an effort to preserve the Maybrook Freight Line did not end up in the final bonding package. The Maybrook Freight Line is a rail line that runs between Derby and Danbury, west into New York, and connects with the state's Waterbury Branch that runs between Torrington and Metro North in Milford. Its structure has fallen into severe disrepair, jeopardizing the future of the line. Miller and the other legislators had proposed a bill to authorize bonding to preserve the railway earlier in the regular session.

"I am disappointed that we were unable to secure this critical funding. Heavy volumes of stone from quarries in Wallingford, Wauregan and Danbury are transported on this line," said Miller. "If the line fails, all of that material will end up in trucks that will batter our congested highways with an additional 50,000 one-way truck trips. This funding would have helped us reduce the impact on commuters, and prevent the loss of a key economic development tool that having that heavy load and wide freight capacity represents."

The Maybrook Line is the only line in the state that can handle loads of 286,000 lbs. as well as oversized loads. It was previously owned between 1950 until the 1990's by New Haven Railroad, PennCentral and Conrail. None of these companies invested in upgrades or improvements to the line. Housatonic Railroad purchased the line in the early 1990's and made efforts to improve the line, but despite this, sections of track, ties and structures have failed.

Miller had expected that these funds go toward the replacement of 7.5 miles of rail, 37,000 ties and restore the roadbed over a 27 mile segment. The project could be done in three phases, which would reduce the overall and up front cost.

"Serious commitment to the improvement of our transportation infrastructure starts with the preservation of the Maybrook Line," said Miller. "The priorities of the legislature will never cease to astonish me. If we are serious about doing something to lessen traffic congestion, this is a critical element."

Miller noted that he would continue attempts to obtain funding for the project.