

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Sen. Boucher Requests Metro-North Oversight Board

Hartford, CT – **Senator Toni Boucher (R-Wilton) ranking member of the Transportation Committee of the General Assembly** released the following statement today re: letter to Governor Malloy and Department of Transportation Commissioner Redeker requesting an oversight board to monitor Metro North in light of its failure to safely manage its rail line.

“As a Metro-North customer and the major contributor to its operating budget, the state of Connecticut should appeal to the Metro Transit Authority (MTA) on behalf of its commuters. I am asking you and Commissioner Redeker to request that the MTA institute an oversight board of highly qualified rail specialists and technicians to supervise Metro-North as it works to raise its standard of service.

“This board would oversee rail operations at all levels, including top management functions, until it determines that Metro-North is once again functioning satisfactorily.

“Too many instances of negligence have been occurring in this group. Most recently, an internal investigation found padded time sheets, including workers who took trips to Pennsylvania for cigarettes and fireworks while they were on the clock, according to The New York Times.

“Reporters at the New York Times, say the information is contained in a draft letter, dated Dec. 3, from Inspector General Barry Kluger. This is using taxpayer’s money in a fraudulent way. Falsifying time sheets, public automobiles for private use and lack of oversight is more than troubling.

“It is unacceptable especially, at a time when safety is of an utmost concern to riders after a series of accidents. There was the deadly accident in the Bronx in early December that left four passengers deceased and most recently, we are learning a train engineer did not report hitting a woman – police later discovered her dead body in the Saugatuck River in Westport. This negligence is deplorable.

“I hope that you and the Department of Transportation will give careful consideration to this proposal and will work with New York officials to create an oversight board that will help rectify the problems that continue to impact Metro-North. This would be an important first step in creating a safer, more efficient and more reliable rail system for our commuters.”

(Attached: Copy of letter from Sen. Boucher to Governor and DOT Commissioner.)

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