

The Office of Governor M. Jodi Rell



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Governor Rell Applauds Improved Shore Line East Customer Satisfaction Responses

Governor M. Jodi Rell today applauded the higher satisfaction ratings given to Shore Line East (SLE) by rail commuters in a new survey and said the rail service east of New Haven is an important component of her effort to reduce traffic congestion and improve mobility in southeastern Connecticut.

“People want viable and convenient alternatives to driving alone and Shore Line East has clearly been embraced by commuters,” Governor Rell said. “The new survey shows satisfaction is improved from the survey we did two years ago, and I believe these results confirm the success of our strategy to get more people out of their cars and into mass transit.”

Among the positive results, overall customer satisfaction was rated higher compared with the numbers received in 2005. When asked how satisfied SLE passengers were with the service overall, the average rating on a 1 to 7 scale was 2.16 (with 1 being “completely satisfied” and 7 being “very dissatisfied”). This was a significant improvement from the 2.66 average rating in the 2005 survey.

The positive image of SLE among its riders was also evident in other important areas where passengers demonstrated overwhelming support. Over 97 percent of those surveyed said they would recommend SLE to a friend, and more than 93 percent agree that SLE is a good value for the money.

“It is encouraging to see that our customers are pleased with Shore Line East service,” said Department of Transportation Commissioner Ralph J. Carpenter. “This rail service provides a direct benefit to the southeastern communities and the congestion in the I-95

corridor. As the state looks to expand rail service in this region, the input from our customers will be incorporated and be important in developing future plans.”

A high level of long-term riders reaffirms the high satisfaction with the service customers reported and suggests that SLE has become an integral part of the communities it serves. Half of all respondents have used SLE for at least four years, with one out of three riding for six years or more.

When the survey asked respondents to prioritize their interest in a number of possible service improvements, late night service on weekdays was among the top priorities of more than two out of three people.

The SLE on-board survey was conducted in May with 627 completed surveys on the sampled SLE trains, a 64 percent response rate. This survey is part of the Department’s commitment to continuously evaluate current service and communicate with the customer.

Shore Line East trains are owned and operated by the DOT under contract with Amtrak to provide daily rail operations. SLE commuter operations began in 1990, serving seven stations along the 33-mile segment of Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor between New Haven and Old Saybrook. The service was extended to New London in 1996. SLE provides nearly 2,000 passenger trips each day, or more than 450,000 each year.