Support RB 111: AN ACT CREATING PENALTIES FOR CAUSING HARM TO A VULNERABLE USER OF A PUBLIC WAY

**Purpose:**
Connecticut has made great strides towards creating safer environments for all users of the State’s roadways. The 2009 enactment of Complete Streets legislation, which requires road projects to incorporate infrastructure for all users of the road, will put Connecticut on a more sustainable transportation path in the years to come. Unfortunately, Connecticut’s roads are still hostile to non-motorized users because of a dearth of enforcement when drivers are careless.

**Needs:**
Careless drivers injure thousands of vulnerable users every year in the United States. In Connecticut alone, 135 pedestrians and cyclists were killed from 2008 to 2010 and injuries to pedestrians and cyclists average approximately 1,500 a year. Unless there is evidence of drug or alcohol use, or a hit and run, these drivers are rarely held accountable for their potentially devastating, and preventable, actions.

**Bill Overview:**
The vulnerable user bill consists of several components, **none of which require any additional revenue** from the State for enactment. The bill would:

- Establish a class of vulnerable users of a public way.
- Define vulnerable users of a public way as pedestrians, highway workers, a person using a wheelchair or motorized chair, persons riding or driving an animal, persons operating farm tractors (or implements of husbandry without enclosed shells), bicycles, scooters, roller or inline skates, and skateboards.
- Establish penalties for infliction of serious physical injury or death to a vulnerable user when a person fails to operate due care when using a motor vehicle. The penalties include:
  - A motor vehicle operator's retraining program and;
  - Performance of community service and;
  - A fine of not more than five thousand dollars.

**Bill Myth:**
While the vulnerable user bill increases fines and penalties for those that operate motor vehicles carelessly, it does not absolve vulnerable users from safely utilizing roadway infrastructure.
Supporters of Safer Public Ways:

Bike and Pedestrian Alliance of Clinton
Debbie Lundgren

Bike Walk Connecticut
MaryEllen Thibodeau, President

Connecticut Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board
Neil Pade, Chair

Connecticut Chapter of the Sierra Club
Martin Mador, Legislative Chair

Connecticut Citizens Transportation Lobby
Jill Kelly and Carol Leightins, Co-Chairs

Connecticut Fund for the Environment
Roger Reynolds, Senior Attorney

Connecticut Horse Council
Amy Stegall, President

Connecticut League of Conservation Voters
Lori Brown, Executive Director

Connecticut Livable Streets Campaign
Mark Abraham

Elm City Cycling
William Kurtz, Board of Directors

Farmington Valley Trails Council, Inc.
Bruce Donald, President

Greenwich Safe Cycling
Vince DiMarco, Chairman

Rail*Trains*Ecology*Cycling
Richard Stowe

Regional Plan Association
David Kooris, Vice President

Shoreline Bicycle and Pedestrian Coalition
Kathy Connolly

Simsbury Bike Walk Advisory Committee
Ann Marie Potter, Member

Sound Cyclists Bicycle Club
Pam Girard, Community Relations Representative

Transit for Connecticut
Karen Burnaska, Coordinator

Tri-State Transportation Campaign
Ryan Lynch, Policy Director

1000 Friends of Connecticut
Nichole Strack, Executive Director

Former State Representative
Thomas Kehoe

Ward Chair, 96th District
David Streever