

SUPPORT THE PROTECTION OF ALL USERS OF CONNECTICUT'S ROADS

Support SB 191: AN ACT CONCERNING THE PENALTY 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, 115 pedestrians and cyclists were killed between 2009 and 2011 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 \$1,000.

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:

(list in formation)

AARP Connecticut
Nora Duncan, State Director

Bike and Pedestrian Alliance of Clinton
Debbie Lundgren, Chair

Bike Walk Connecticut
Kelly Kennedy, Executive Director

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 Leighton, 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

Greenwich Safe Cycling
Vince DiMarco, Chairman

Regional Plan Association
Amanda Kennedy, Connecticut Director

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
Steven Higashide, Senior Planner

1000 Friends of Connecticut
Susan Merrow, Board Chair

Yale Traffic Safety Committee
Kirsten Bechtel, M.D. (Pediatrician, New Haven)