



General Assembly

January Session, 2003

***Raised Bill No. 6672***

LCO No. 4331

Referred to Committee on Transportation

Introduced by:  
(TRA)

***AN ACT CONCERNING HIGHWAY SAFETY.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 14-218a of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2003*):

3 (a) No person shall operate a motor vehicle upon any public  
4 highway of the state, or road of any specially chartered municipal  
5 association or any district organized under the provisions of chapter  
6 105, a purpose of which is the construction and maintenance of roads  
7 and sidewalks, or on any parking area as defined in section 14-212, or  
8 upon a private road on which a speed limit has been established in  
9 accordance with this subsection, or upon any school property, at a rate  
10 of speed greater than is reasonable, having regard to the width, traffic  
11 and use of highway, road or parking area, the intersection of streets  
12 and weather conditions. The State Traffic Commission may determine  
13 speed limits which are reasonable and safe on any state highway,  
14 bridge or parkway built or maintained by the state, and differing limits  
15 may be established for different types of vehicles, and may erect or  
16 cause to be erected signs indicating such speed limits. The traffic  
17 authority of any town, city or borough may establish speed limits on

18 streets, highways and bridges or in any parking area for ten cars or  
19 more or on any private road wholly within the municipality under its  
20 jurisdiction; provided such limit on streets, highways, bridges and  
21 parking areas for ten cars or more shall become effective only after  
22 application for approval thereof has been submitted in writing to the  
23 State Traffic Commission and a certificate of such approval has been  
24 forwarded by the commission to the traffic authority; and provided  
25 such signs giving notice of such speed limits shall have been erected as  
26 the State Traffic Commission directs, provided the erection of such  
27 signs on any private road shall be at the expense of the owner of such  
28 road. The presence of such signs adjacent to or on the highway or  
29 parking area for ten cars or more shall be prima facie evidence that  
30 they have been so placed under the direction of and with the approval  
31 of the State Traffic Commission. Approval of such speed limits may be  
32 revoked by said commission at any time if it deems such revocation to  
33 be in the interest of public safety and welfare, and thereupon such  
34 speed limits shall cease to be effective and any signs that have been  
35 erected shall be removed. Any speed in excess of such limits, other  
36 than speeding as provided for in section 14-219, shall be prima facie  
37 evidence that such speed is not reasonable, but the fact that the speed  
38 of a vehicle is lower than such limits shall not relieve the operator from  
39 the duty to decrease speed when a special hazard exists with respect to  
40 pedestrians or other traffic or by reason of weather or highway  
41 conditions.

42 (b) The State Traffic Commission shall establish a speed limit of  
43 sixty-five miles per hour on any multiple lane, limited access highways  
44 that are suitable for a speed limit of sixty-five miles per hour, taking  
45 into consideration relevant factors including design, population of area  
46 and traffic flow.

47 (c) Notwithstanding subsection (b) of this section, the State Traffic  
48 Commission shall establish a speed limit of not greater than fifty-five  
49 miles per hour for trucks on every state highway, bridge or parkway  
50 built or maintained by the state.

51 [(c)] (d) Any person who operates a motor vehicle at a greater rate  
52 of speed than is reasonable, other than speeding, as provided for in  
53 section 14-219, shall commit the infraction of traveling unreasonably  
54 fast.

55 Sec. 2. (*Effective from passage*) The Commissioner of Transportation  
56 shall, in consultation with the Department of Public Safety and the  
57 Department of Motor Vehicles, develop a plan to: (1) Open weigh  
58 stations a sufficient number of hours to weigh and inspect vehicles  
59 traveling on public highways to ensure that vehicles are in compliance  
60 with section 14-267a of the general statutes; and (2) establish regularly  
61 scheduled and enforced hours of operation for weigh stations. In  
62 developing the plan, the commissioner shall consider the provisions of  
63 sections 14-270a to 14-270d, inclusive, of the general statutes. Not later  
64 than September 1, 2003, the commissioner shall submit the plan, in  
65 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes,  
66 to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having  
67 cognizance of matters relating to transportation.

68 Sec. 3. (*Effective from passage*) (a) The Chief Court Administrator, in  
69 consultation with the Chief State's Attorney, the Chief Public Defender  
70 and the Commissioner of Public Safety, or their designees, shall  
71 conduct a study on means for achieving more effective prosecutions of  
72 motor vehicle moving violations, as defined in subsection (a) of section  
73 14-111g of the general statutes, including, but not limited to, a review  
74 of: (1) The procedures of state and local police departments for  
75 identifying and charging violations; (2) the policies of the office of the  
76 Chief State's Attorney for charging and prosecuting offenders; (3) the  
77 procedures of courts for processing cases involving safety-related  
78 motor vehicle offenses in a timely manner; and (4) the feasibility of  
79 establishing traffic courts.

80 (b) Not later than January 1, 2004, the Chief Court Administrator  
81 shall report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the  
82 general statutes, the findings and recommendations of the study,

83 which shall include an analysis of the likelihood of traffic courts  
84 deterring motor vehicle moving violations, and recommendations for  
85 policies and procedures to implement the findings and  
86 recommendations, to the joint standing committees of the General  
87 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to transportation and  
88 the judiciary.

89       Sec. 4. (*Effective from passage*) The Commissioner of Transportation,  
90 in consultation with the Department of Public Safety and the  
91 Department of Motor Vehicles, shall develop a plan to install photo  
92 radar devices on all public highways in the state to identify speed limit  
93 violators. The plan shall include notification of violators by mail and  
94 shall provide for payment of fines for infractions by mail. Not later  
95 than September 1, 2003, the commissioner shall submit a report, in  
96 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes,  
97 on the plan to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly  
98 having cognizance of matters relating to transportation.

99       Sec. 5. (*Effective from passage*) The Commissioner of Transportation  
100 shall conduct a study to determine the safety of all exit and entrance  
101 ramps on interstate highways in the state. The study shall include, but  
102 not be limited to, an analysis of the ease and safety of vehicles merging  
103 from such ramps into the flow of traffic. Not later than September 1,  
104 2003, the commissioner shall report, in accordance with the provisions  
105 of section 11-4a of the general statutes, the findings and  
106 recommendations of the study, which shall include recommendations  
107 for closing any ramps the commissioner deems unsafe and for policies  
108 and procedures to implement the findings and recommendations, to  
109 the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having  
110 cognizance of matters relating to transportation.

111       Sec. 6. Subsection (a) of section 13b-26 of the general statutes is  
112 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective*  
113 *October 1, 2003*):

114       (a) The commissioner shall make such alterations in the state

115 highway system as he may from time to time deem necessary and  
116 desirable to fulfill the purposes of this chapter and title 13a. In making  
117 any such alteration he shall consider the best interest of the state,  
118 taking into consideration relevant factors including the following:  
119 Traffic flow, origin and destination of traffic, integration and  
120 circulation of traffic, continuity of routes, alternate available routes and  
121 changes in traffic patterns. The relative weight to be given to any factor  
122 shall be determined by the commissioner. All alterations in said  
123 highway system shall be consistent with the comprehensive long-  
124 range master transportation plan and shall, to the extent possible, be  
125 planned and made so that no area of the state is adversely effected at  
126 any time by multiple alterations being made in that area. Each  
127 biennium the commissioner shall notify all members of the General  
128 Assembly of the availability of the plan. A member requesting a plan  
129 shall be sent a written copy or electronic storage media of the plan by  
130 the commissioner.

131       Sec. 7. (*Effective from passage*) The Commissioner of Transportation  
132 shall, in consultation with the Department of Public Safety and the  
133 Department of Motor Vehicles, develop a plan to expand the present  
134 use of the following highway safety measures: (1) Vision barriers to  
135 reduce (A) glare from motor vehicle head lamps, and (B) traffic  
136 congestion due to motor vehicle operator onlooking during highway  
137 incidents; (2) the Connecticut Highway Assistance Motorist Patrol,  
138 including expansion of the program to limited access highways; (3)  
139 raised strips known as "rumble strips" along the outer edge of  
140 highways to alert motor vehicle operators who have driven off the  
141 highway and the addition of centerline rumble strips. Not later than  
142 September 1, 2003, the commissioner shall submit the plan, in  
143 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes,  
144 to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having  
145 cognizance of matters relating to transportation.

146       Sec. 8. (*Effective from passage*) The Commissioners of Transportation  
147 and Public Safety shall establish a procedure, to commence not later

148 than July 1, 2003, to consult regularly with commercial shippers and  
149 receivers of goods, truck operators and employers to encourage such  
150 shippers and receivers, truck operators and employers to establish  
151 flexible driving and work hours to reduce traffic on congested  
152 highways during certain hours. Not later than September 1, 2003, the  
153 commissioners shall submit a report, in accordance with the provisions  
154 of section 11-4a of the general statutes, about the procedure, including  
155 the results of consultations that have occurred as of the date of the  
156 report, to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having  
157 cognizance of matters relating to transportation. The procedure shall  
158 become effective no later than January 1, 2004.

159       Sec. 9. (*Effective from passage*) Not later than September 1, 2003, the  
160 Commissioner of Transportation shall submit a report, in accordance  
161 with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint  
162 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of  
163 matters relating to transportation that describes in detail the existing  
164 policy of the Department of Transportation concerning highway  
165 lighting. The report shall include, but not be limited to, the  
166 department's policy for: (1) Selection of highways or segments of  
167 highways for lighting; (2) positioning of lights on highways; and (3)  
168 determining when lights are illuminated.

This act shall take effect as follows:	
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2003</i>
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>
Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>
Sec. 4	<i>from passage</i>
Sec. 5	<i>from passage</i>
Sec. 6	<i>October 1, 2003</i>
Sec. 7	<i>from passage</i>
Sec. 8	<i>from passage</i>
Sec. 9	<i>from passage</i>

**Statement of Purpose:**

To make Connecticut highways safer.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*