



# Connecticut Construction Industries Association, Inc.

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**Senate Bill 634, An Act Concerning Highway Worker Safety**  
**Judiciary Committee**  
**March 10, 2008**

## **CCIA Position: Support**

Connecticut Construction Industries Association, Inc. (CCIA) represents the commercial construction industry in Connecticut and is committed to working together to advance and promote a better quality of life for all citizens in the state. CCIA is comprised of more than 350 members, including contractors, subcontractors, suppliers and affiliated organizations representing all aspects of the construction industry. Connecticut Road Builders Association (CRBA), a division of CCIA, represents all facets of the transportation construction industry in the state.

CCIA **supports** Senate Bill 634, An Act Concerning Highway Worker Safety and respectfully requests that the Judiciary Committee approve the bill. SB 634 would establish the crimes of endangerment of a highway worker and aggravated endangerment of a highway worker.

Highway work zones are becoming increasingly dangerous places. There is more traffic and greater congestion on our state highways. Cell phones and other electronic devices have created more distractions for drivers. Many drivers continue to violate posted speed limits in construction work zones. As a result, highway construction workers are significantly exposed to greater risk of injury or death on the job. SB 634 will go a long way toward helping save lives and prevent injuries in highway construction areas by deterring unsafe driving in a highway work zone.

The U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration monitors work zone safety and has compiled the following sobering statistics about the dangers of highway work zones (from Work Zone Safety Facts & Statistics, March 28, 2007):

- the number of persons killed in motor vehicle crashes in work zones increased from 989 in 2001 to 1,074 in 2005 (an average of 1,068 fatalities a year)
- on average from 2001 to 2005 about 15 percent of the fatalities resulting from crashes in work zones were non-motorists (pedestrians and bicyclists)
- more than 40,000 people are injured each year as a result of motor vehicle crashes in work zones
- approximately half of all fatal work zone crashes occurred during the day



- more than two times as many fatal work zone crashes occurred on weekdays as on weekends
- fatal work zone crashes occurred most often in the summer and the fall

The National Work Zone Safety Information Clearinghouse (NWZSIC) is managed by American Road & Transportation Builders Association Transportation Development Foundation and is housed at the Texas Transportation Institute of Texas A & M University. NWZSIC is the world's largest cyber-library of information on road construction safety best practices, laws, regulations, public awareness campaigns, products, training and educational materials. It has a wealth of material and resources and it can be accessed at [www.WorkZoneSafety.org](http://www.WorkZoneSafety.org).

The state of Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT) has done a great deal to adopt and implement measures to slow traffic in work zones. "Operation Big Orange" is a joint effort between DOT and the State Police to monitor speeds of vehicles traveling through DOT maintenance work zones. It is designed to increase awareness of dangers in and to increase perception of enforcement in work zones and to enforce reduced speed limits and motor vehicle laws in highway work zones. CRBA has also worked in conjunction with DOT to publicize and support Work Zone Safety weeks to encourage motorists to slow down in work zones. State law doubles fines for moving violations in a work safety zone while work is ongoing. But the state can do more.

Senate Bill 500 would go a long way toward ensuring the safety of highway workers. Its increased penalties for moving violations and endangering workers in a highway work zone would impose appropriate sanctions on violators, deter unsafe driving and remind unsafe drivers of the importance of slowing down to protect workers on state highways.

For additional information please contact Donald Shubert or Matthew Hallisey at (860) 529-6855.