

Feb. 23, 2009

Senator Eric Coleman  
Representative Brendan Sharkey  
Co-Chairs, Planning and Development Committee  
Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Senator Coleman, Representative Sharkey and members of the Committee:

I am writing in support of Proposed Bill No 5522, An Act Requiring the Enactment of a Connecticut "Livable Streets" Program.

As a 22-year resident of Hamden, I've been mostly biking, and occasionally driving and walking around greater New Haven for more than two decades. I hate to say it, but in some ways I feel less safe on the road than in the past, and one of the reasons is the total impunity with which motor vehicles run red lights in the area – only recently addressed by New Haven's new police chief, James Lewis. In running a red light, a motorist often speeds up when approaching the intersection, thus committing two dangerous traffic violations.

I believe that installing red light cameras on city streets that would photograph the license plates of violators and generate an automatic ticket would help reduce this dangerous practice. My initial concerns about privacy have been allayed through my understanding that these are still cameras and they do not photograph the driver, just the license plate. In the few instances where the driver is not the person to whom the vehicle is registered, I trust the consequences can be sorted out among the parties.

I think red light cameras would greatly assist the police departments around the state in enforcing traffic safety laws. This has proven to be the case in some other parts of the country where they have been installed.

I urge the committee to vote in favor of this legislation.

Sincerely,

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