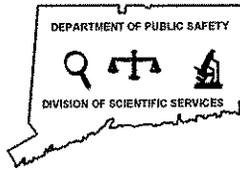




STATE OF CONNECTICUT



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

John A. Danaher III
Commissioner

Lieutenant Edwin S. Henion
Chief of Staff

February 24, 2009

Rep. Stephen Dargan, Co-Chairman
Sen. Andrea Stillman, Co-Chairman
Public Safety and Security Committee
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

**HB 6453 AN ACT CONCERNING THE DUTY OF MOTOR VEHICLES WHEN APPROACHING
STATIONARY EMERGENCY VEHICLES**

The Department of Public Safety supports this bill.

A "Move Over" law is designed to protect emergency responders, including Police, Fire, EMS, DOT Workers, and Wrecker Operators while working at incident scenes along our busiest highways. Connecticut is one of only six states in the nation that does not have a move over law. Enactment of a "Move Over" law will afford an opportunity for public safety professionals to educate motorists about the dangers of approaching emergency responders along our limited access highways.

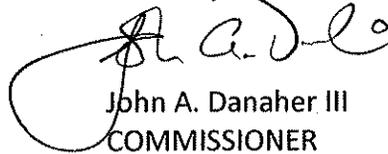
Nationally, since 1997, over 150 law enforcement officers have been struck and killed by passing traffic. In the one hundred and five year history of the Connecticut State Police, fourteen troopers have been struck and killed by passing motorists, leaving behind spouses and children to suffer the painful loss of a loved one.

In 2008, the department had a total of 248 accidents. The majority of these accidents were the result of careless and negligent operation by motorists who strike state police cruisers. On 1/28/09, during inclement weather conditions (snow), five department accidents were recorded in 24 hour period in which motorists slid into the rear end of state police cruisers.

While the safety of our troopers and other emergency responders is the primary reason to enact a "move over law" in Connecticut, it should be pointed out that passage of such a bill would also likely provide savings to the state in reducing workmen's compensation claims, funds allocated to repair and replace damaged state police cruisers, and overtime costs replacing injured troopers. When a Connecticut State Police cruiser is completely "totaled" in a motor vehicle crash, it costs the agency \$43,000.00 to replace the vehicle and equipment inside the vehicle. Since 2002, the Department of Public Safety has expended 6.3 million in Workmen's Compensation claims as a result of motor vehicle accidents. In 2008, the department spent \$396,709 .00 to fix and repair motor vehicles involved in crashes.

This law, if enacted, would help emergency responders on our highways, police, fire, EMS, DOT construction workers, and wrecker operators. We have an ethical responsibility to ensure that our emergency responders are afforded the safest possible working environment. I am confident that enacting this piece of legislation will save future lives and prevent needless injuries.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John A. Danaher III". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "D".

John A. Danaher III
COMMISSIONER