



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

2800 BERLIN TURNPIKE, P.O. BOX 317546
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06131-7546



Office of the
Commissioner

An Equal Opportunity Employer

Public Hearing – February 23, 2009 Transportation Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Joseph F. Marie Department of Transportation

H.B. 5507 – An Act Concerning the Operation of Low Emission Vehicles in the High Occupancy Vehicle Lane.

The Department of Transportation (Department) offers the following comments on H.B. 5507, AAC the Operation of Low Emission Vehicles in the High Occupancy Vehicle Lane.

The Department does not recommend opening up the high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes to Hybrid-Type vehicles. The HOV lanes in Connecticut average approximately 25,000 vehicles per day. While this proposed legislation is designed to raise the consciousness of and use of environmentally friendly vehicles, the HOV lanes were designed to promote high occupancy use of automobiles. Allowing single occupant autos to use the HOV lanes would introduce enforcement issues, since the State Police would be forced to attempt to identify first if there was only one person in a vehicle and secondly if that vehicle is designated as a Hybrid automobile. This action might in itself encourage unauthorized single occupant vehicle drivers to use the HOV lanes.

For further information or questions, please contact Pam Sucato, Legislative Program Manager for the Department of Transportation, at (860) 594-3013.



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H.B. 6069 - An Act Concerning Traffic Calming.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) offers the following comments on H.B. 6069, AAC Traffic Calming.

During DOT's normal design process, we consider the implementation of appropriate traffic calming measures in conjunction with planned roadway improvements. It is important to note that traffic calming methods are not always the cure-all for addressing traffic and pedestrian safety concerns.

The success of traffic calming is dependent on the existence of appropriate alternate routes to service the transferred traffic. In the absence of suitable alternatives, the same traffic problems the calming measures are intended to address can be transferred to less appropriate routes as well as encourage erratic driver behavior on the calmed roadway. Even calming efforts that are successful in directing traffic can unintentionally create or exacerbate existing congestion and/or safety issues on otherwise suitable roadways. Traffic calming efforts are normally more suited to local roadways rather than major urban routes. Traffic calming measures are therefore already a consideration in the Department's design process and maybe implemented on urban projects on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with local officials.

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**Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Joseph F. Marie
Department of Transportation**

H.B. 6221 - An Act Concerning Transportation Patterns.

The Department of Transportation (Department) offers the following comments on H.B. 6221, AAC Transportation Patterns.

The Department maintains a continuous inventory of traffic volumes for all state highways. Detailed information and analysis is prepared for specific corridors during planning for future needs and can include on-site traffic counting and transit passenger surveys.

The Department has also been working with the University of Connecticut in developing a mechanism for collecting travel pattern data on a regular basis, to supplement national census data.

For further information or questions, please contact Pam Sucato, Legislative Program Manager for the Department of Transportation, at (860) 594-3013.



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H.B. 6227 - An Act Concerning the Safety of Whaley Avenue in New Haven.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) offers the following comments on H.B. 6227, AAC the Safety of Whaley Avenue in New Haven.

The Department maintains State highway routes (Routes 69, 63 and 10) on Whaley Avenue in New Haven from the Woodbridge town line to Ella Grasso Boulevard - a distance of approximately 2.34 miles. The City of New Haven maintains the remaining 1.10 mile segment from Ella Grasso Boulevard to Elm Street. Since DOT does not have jurisdiction over the City maintained portion of Whaley Avenue, responsibility for any safety monitoring of this section of roadway should lie with the city.

In regard to the Whaley Avenue section maintained by the State, the Department has programmed an improvement project (92-547) to address the 0.73 mile section of Route 63 from Glen View Terrace to Emerson Street. The project includes numerous safety measures intended to address the needs of all users of the roadway. Project No. 92-547 is presently scheduled to be completed by July of 2010.

Since Project No. 92-547 addresses a significant section of the New Haven Whaley Avenue State highway mileage, it is recommended that any safety study not be undertaken until such time that the project has been completed and an appropriate time period has passed so that the accident experience reflects the new highway conditions.

It is estimated that it would cost the Department approximately \$100,000 to conduct the indicated safety study for the State maintained portion of Whaley Avenue.

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H. B. 6271 - An Act Requiring a Review of Traffic Patterns at Exit 58 on Route 15.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) offers the following comments on H.B. 6271, An Act Requiring a Review of Traffic Patterns at Exit 58 on Route 15.

DOT is currently exploring concepts to address safety and operational concerns at the Route 15/Route 34 interchange (Exits 57/58) in the Town of Orange. On July 2, 2008, a meeting was held with Town officials to discuss the concepts. At the request of the Town, the Department developed a variation of one of the concepts which was discussed at a December 2, 2008 meeting. The Town was not in favor of the revised concept and asked that the Department consider yet another concept which involves relocating the existing commuter lot farther to the west on Route 34. Once all the concepts have been developed, another meeting will be held and a timetable for a public informational meeting will be developed.

For further information or questions, please contact Pam Sucato, Legislative Program Manager for the Department of Transportation, at (860) 594-3013.