



## State of Connecticut

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### Testimony in Support of HB 5902 Transportation Committee March 11, 2009

Good morning Chairmen DeFronzo and Guerrera, Ranking Members Boucher and Scribner and members of the Transportation Committee. I am here today to testify in support of **HB 5902: AN ACT CONCERNING THE REMOVAL OF SNOW AND ICE FROM MOTOR VEHICLES.**

I am sure many others, beside me, believe that a driver's safety should not be put in jeopardy by the mere fact that other motorists have failed to properly remove the snow and ice from atop their vehicles.

Under HB 5902, motorists would be penalized for failing to remove ice or snow from their vehicle after an incident had occurred as a result of the build up of snow and/or ice. Having a driver's license in this state is a privilege, not a right, and with it come responsibilities. I believe that properly clearing vehicles of ice and snow is not just a matter of courtesy, but common sense, often times ignored or forgotten because we all lead such busy lives.

As members of the Transportation Committee, I am sure you are keenly aware that motorists may be warned, fined, even arrested for reckless driving. The legislature saw fit to grant law enforcement this tool for the sake of accident prevention. I strongly recommend this committee adopt language that gives law enforcement the same means to penalize motorists who have failed to adequately clear their vehicles before taking to the roads.

All too often we hear reports of motorists who have been involved in incidents where accumulated snow, or worse yet, ice has become dislodged from a motor vehicle at a high rate of speed and has taken aim right at the windshield of an unsuspecting motorist. Worse yet, serious injury and even deaths have occurred

Connecticut's neighbors have seen fit to propose, and in three states adopted language protecting motorists from snow or ice falling off motor vehicles.

In New Hampshire, the law provides penalties for reckless or negligent operation of a motor vehicle when damage or an accident is caused by the failure to remove snow and ice.

New Jersey law provides for fines up to \$1000 for passenger vehicle operators and up to \$1500 for commercial motor vehicle operators who cause damage to persons or property by snow and ice becoming dislodged from a moving vehicle. Currently, there is proposed legislation to allow police to fine persons up to \$75 for failure to clear car of ice and snow accumulated from their cars.

In New York legislation has been introduced to require motorists to clear snow and ice from the roof, windshield and cargo beds of vehicles. Failure to remove accumulated snow and ice could result in a fine of up to \$850 for non-commercial vehicles and up to \$1250 for commercial motor vehicles.

In Pennsylvania, if snow and ice is dislodged from a moving vehicle and strikes another vehicle or pedestrian and causes death or serious bodily injury the operator of the vehicle from which the snow or ice is dislodged is subject to a fine up to \$1000.

Other states include Georgia, Michigan, and Nebraska and most recently the District of Columbia passed a city ordinance to remove snow and ice from vehicles.

There have been several bills since 1991 introduced that would require a motor vehicle operator to remove accumulated ice or snow from their vehicle prior to operating it on highways and roads in Connecticut. It's finally time to sign this into law.

I strongly urge the Transportation Committee to pass this bill along for full consideration.

I thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today and welcome any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Lawrence F. Cafero