

Prepared Testimony of the City of New Haven
Respectfully submitted to the Joint Committee on Transportation



City of New Haven
John DeStefano, Jr.
Mayor

RE: SB 735, AN ACT IMPROVING BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

Senator DeFronzo, Representative Guerrero and members of the Committee, the City of New Haven is pleased to stand in support of SB 735, an Act Improving Bicycle and Pedestrian Access and, in general, the statewide movement toward a "Complete Streets" transportation program.

The City of New Haven is committed to a safe and sustainable system for all of its residents, visitors and businesses. This commitment is built upon the support and dedication of many dedicated community volunteers who have responded to the call following the recent tragedies at the Yale Medical School and along Whalley Avenue in Westville. Proposed Complete Streets legislation provides us with a framework for implementation of sustainable measures, thereby improving safety for cyclists and pedestrians. These are our target populations given since New Haven has the highest percentage of residents who walk to work (14%) among the largest New England cities.

Our challenge is significant. The surface transportation system in New Haven is extensive relative to state averages. In total, there are 255 miles of roadway in the city - the eighth highest amount of any Connecticut municipality. Of these roadways, over 12% are state-maintained and we therefore need dedicated state assistance to establishing Complete Streets across the system.

The proposed bill further recognizes the importance and interrelatedness of our transportation, land use, environmental and economic policies, specifically by addressing bicycle and pedestrian movements. Each will be key to our future economic position. Globally, there is increased attention to climate change and dependence on foreign oil, two conditions which will adversely affect our quality of life and economic standing. In no uncertain terms, sustainable systems will drive our economic recovery. Thank you for your time and consideration of this timely legislation, which is a critical part of the larger solution.

Respectfully submitted to the Joint Committee on Transportation, March 11, 2009.

CITY OF NEW HAVEN

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