State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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Senator DeFranzo, Representative Guerrera and members of the Transportation Committee.

My name is Hector Robles and I am the State Representative from the 6th Assembly District in Hartford. I am writing today in support of H.B. 6066.

My support for this bill is derived from my personal experience in enforcing in the current cell phone law. As a police officer for the City of Hartford for the past fifteen years, I have issued numerous infractions for such violation. The most common excuse that I have gotten from the violators was "I didn't see you."

In 2008 Hartford issued 1,241 infractions. According to the Judicial Department, there were 17,755 citations issued in 2006, 33,384 in 2007, and 38,336 in 2008. The 2008 figure is a 14. 8% increase over 2007 and a 115. 9% increase over 2006.

A law that was started to be enforced on October 1, 2005 has not been too effective. As you can see that the numbers of infractions have increased in the past three years instead of decreasing. I believe that the current law doesn't have enough "teeth", because many of the infractions were being nolled by the court system. A substantial proportion of the cases were nolled in FY 07 and FY 08 (35% and 33%, respectively), presumably under the penalty suspension provision. In a majority of cases in each year, drivers paid their fines to the Centralized Infractions Bureau (96% in FY 06, 52% in FY 07, and 53% in FY 08).

With the prices of hands free devices as low as five dollars, and the blue-tooth ear pieces as low as twenty dollars, I believe that we need to send a message to violators that we are serious about the safety of our constituents on our roads, and double the fine to two hundred dollars. I ask for your support of this legislation.

Thank you,

Hector Robles