

**Testimony in support of S.B. 735:
An Act to Improve Bicycle and Pedestrian Access**

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Thank you to the Transportation Committee for your support of bicycle-friendly legislation during last year's session. On behalf of the Central Connecticut Bicycle Alliance, I ask that you continue your support this year. Based on the results of a nation-wide survey, the League of American Bicyclists has ranked Connecticut 42nd out of 50 states in regards to its bicycle-friendliness. We have an opportunity for significant improvement.

S.B. 735 contains many elements that will improve the quality of life in Connecticut, with minimal, if any, additional expense. At a time of fiscal responsibility, this is an opportunity to pass legislation that promotes health and the environment in a budget neutral manner.

Dedicating a portion of funds to be used for bicycle and pedestrian improvements will help to move Connecticut's transportation system forward. Cycling and walking can and should be an integral part of our transportation system, whether used as the sole method of transportation or as part of an inter-modal commute. Our society is calling for healthier, environmentally-friendly "green" transportation alternatives. Many people currently use cycling and walking for some or all of their transportation needs. Many more would do so if safer opportunities existed.

The creation of a state Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board would provide the state with a valuable resource to guide these much-needed improvements. The members of the committee would serve either as volunteers or within their current state positions, providing no impact on the state's budget. In 2006, the Department of Transportation created its Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, of which I am a member. While I applaud the concept, the committee has only been called to meet on 2 occasions – October 10, 2006 and April 4, 2007. It has been almost 2 years since the last meeting. The new Board would meet a minimum of 4 times / year, allowing for much-improved continuity and effectiveness.

The Central Connecticut Bicycle Alliance looks forward to continuing its work towards a more bicycle-friendly Connecticut. Thank you for your consideration of this important and much-needed bill.