



Testimony of Ryan Lynch, senior planner and Connecticut coordinator  
Tri-State Transportation Campaign  
Joint Committee on Transportation

March 3, 2010

My name is Ryan Lynch, and I am the senior planner and Connecticut coordinator for the Tri-State Transportation Campaign, a non-profit organization working for a more balanced transportation network in Connecticut, downstate New York and New Jersey.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify today, but would also like formally thank the Transportation Committee for its leadership on last year's Complete Streets bill. Your actions and support will go a long way towards creating more livable communities and a more sustainable transportation system in Connecticut. The bill has become a model in the tri-state region and advocates are using Connecticut as an example to pass similar legislation in New York and hopefully New Jersey. You should be commended.

As a way to build upon the success of the Complete Streets bill, I am here today in support of Raised Bill 5386, *AN ACT CONCERNING THE SAFETY OF PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS AND THE PROMOTION OF HEALTHY COMMUNITIES*.

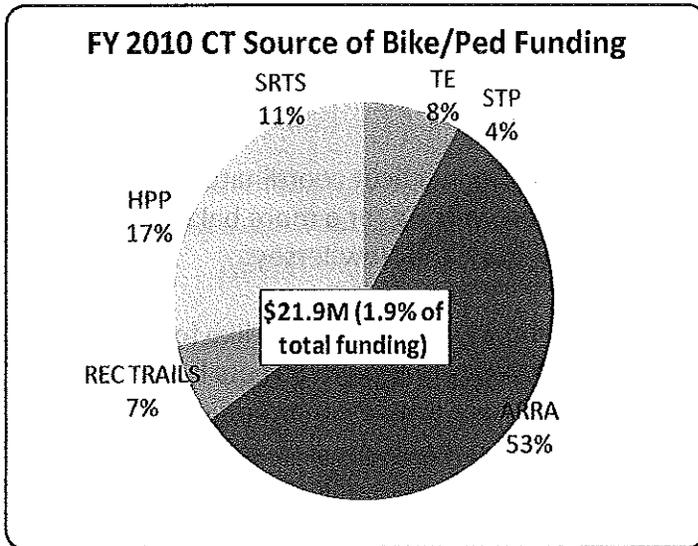
While we believe that ConnDOT is beginning to shift away from its highway-centric past and is beginning to link transportation policy with better land use, we need elected officials to take swift, bold actions that support this shift.

Raised Bill 5386 is the next logical step towards doing this.

Tri-State's recent report *Tracking the Dollars: A Review of Projected Transportation Spending in Connecticut, 2010-2013*, shows that Connecticut continues to shortchange its transportation system. Connecticut spends only \$1.67 per person on bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Even with the enactment of Complete Streets, Connecticut still falls well behind neighboring Rhode Island's investment of \$6.12 per person and below Iowa, a state with a comparable population but less dense than Connecticut, which spends almost \$4 per person.

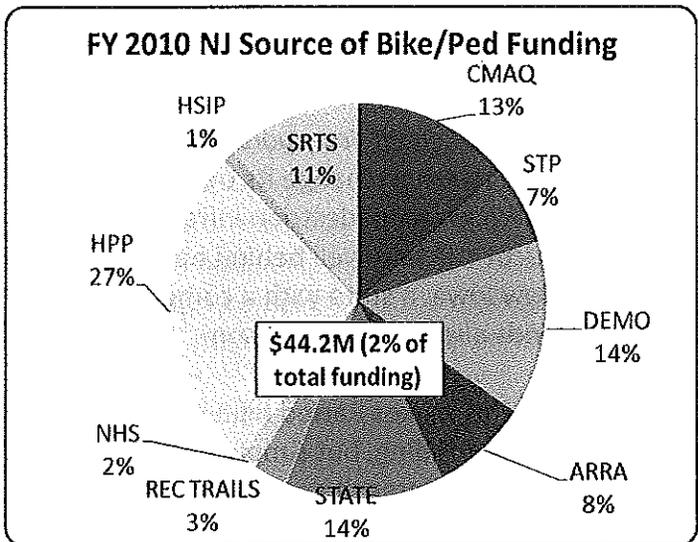
We understand that the State's budget is in dire straits. This makes Raised Bill 5386 ideal for this session. It is revenue neutral. It does not call for more funding, but simply asks ConnDOT to spend funds differently and prioritize bicycle, pedestrian and transit access projects.

Specifically, supporting Raised Bill 5386 would pre-designate 10% of existing Highway Safety Improvement Program, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program and the National Highway Safety 402 Funds to create a competitive grant program for municipalities to be used for the construction of pedestrian, cycling and transit access infrastructure. Connecticut currently spends **zero** of these federal program dollars on bike and pedestrian projects. Spending 10% of these funds would generate over \$4.5 million for this grant program, a small drop in the bucket for a state with a transportation capital program worth over \$5 billion.



ARRA—Stimulus Funding  
 STP—Surface Transportation Program  
 Rec Trails—Recreational Trails  
 HPP—High Priority Project (Earmark)  
 SRTS—Safe Routes to School  
 TE—Transportation Enhancements

Contrary to what is believed by many agency officials, federal money can be dedicated to bicycle and pedestrian projects. For example, the State of New Jersey uses both Congestion Mitigation-Air Quality (CMAQ) and Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds to support bicycle and pedestrian projects. The graph below is part of an analysis conducted by Tri-State Transportation Campaign of the New Jersey Department of Transportation Capital Program and shows the breakout of this funding in FY 2009.



ARRA—Stimulus Funding  
 CMAQ—Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program  
 HSIP—Highway Safety Improvement Program  
 STP—Surface Transportation Program  
 DEMO—Demonstration Project (Earmark)  
 Rec Trails—Recreational Trails  
 HPP—High Priority Project (Earmark)  
 SRTS—Safe Routes to School  
 State—State Funding

Connecticut's underfunding of safe pedestrian, cycling and transit access infrastructure is devastating.

From 2006-2008, 122 pedestrians and cyclists were killed on Connecticut's roadways. Of the pedestrian fatalities in Connecticut, nearly two-thirds of the fatalities occurred within a quarter mile of a bus line and a half a mile of a rail station and overwhelmingly impact our senior populations. The establishment of Safe Routes to Transit or Safe Routes for Seniors programs could be a beneficial use of this competitive grant program.

If improving the safety for Connecticut's roadway users is not important enough, these investments tackle another pressing need in Connecticut.

The need for jobs, jobs and more jobs.

In the continuing economic downturn, we need to look for investments that will yield the biggest bang for the buck. Investments in cycling, pedestrian and transit access infrastructure do just this. They come at very low costs but generate great benefits for the economy, environment and the public's health. They also can be bid out incredibly fast, with no need for an environmental review process. This would put Connecticut's building trade workers, which face 30% unemployment, to work immediately.

We urge you to support this important legislation.

Tri-State also supports Raised Bill 345, *AN ACT AUTHORIZING MUNICIPALITIES TO CONDUCT A PILOT PROGRAM FOR THE USE OF AUTOMATED TRAFFIC CONTROL SIGNAL ENFORCEMENT DEVICES AT CERTAIN INTERSECTIONS.*

For the very reason we support more prioritized funding for bicycle, pedestrian and transit access infrastructure, we also support this pilot program for red light cameras. We need to calm traffic on Connecticut's roads and make them safe for all users. Red light cameras have proven to be deterrents to red light running and have reduced accidents which in turn save lives and prevent injuries.

The Connecticut General Assembly has been debating Red Light Camera legislation for years. The time to act is now. Neighboring New York City has used red light cameras since 1993. Since then, the City has seen a 62 percent decline in red light running at intersections with cameras.

Importantly, the public is supportive of red light cameras and the safety they bring. A 2009 Public Opinion Strategies poll indicates that nearly 70% of the nation supports red light cameras. We hope after years of debate, the Connecticut General Assembly follows the lead.

Thank you.