



314 Southford Road  
Southbury, CT 06488  
Alesia DiFederico  
203-509-6603

March 9, 2010

Transportation Committee  
300 Capitol Avenue  
Room 2300 LOB  
Hartford, CT 06106

Testimony for Public Hearing  
Wednesday March 10, 2010

Re: **HB 5457 AN ACT ENHANCING PENALTIES FOR HARM TO VULNERABLE USERS OF A PUBLIC WAY.**

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

My name is Alesia DiFederico, I am offering this testimony today on behalf of Southbury Horse & Livestock Association. We would like to offer our **SUPPORT for Bill 5457 the ENHANCEMENT OF PENALTIES FOR HARM TO VULNERABLE USERS.**

Our group represents the local equestrian community in Southbury. We are lucky enough to have the Larkin State Bridle Trail running through a portion of our town and continuing down into Naugatuck. This State Park Multipurpose Trail crosses a number of state and local roads with varying degrees of vehicular traffic. The road crossings here in Southbury, Middlebury, Oxford and Naugatuck are typical of many of the multipurpose trails throughout our state.

Each time we ride our horses or walk the dogs we are subject to vehicular traffic at these road crossings. Many drivers are understanding of other types of users on the road and usually slow their speed and/or give the user a wide berth as they drive past.

One would think common sense and caution were the general rule when encountering horses and riders either crossing a road or traveling on the shoulder to another trail entrance. Unfortunately this is **NOT** always the case. We have experienced aggressive drivers who pass groups of horseback riders at a high rate of speed. We have seen drivers who honk their horns or rev their engines when passing a horseback rider and most alarmingly drivers who actually swerve toward the rider to elicit a reaction from the horse.

Motorized vehicle operators should be held to a higher standard of courtesy when they encounter a vulnerable user. Each pedestrian, dog walker, bicyclist or horseback rider should be able to share the road with motor vehicles without fear of grievous injury.

We ask that you please **SUPPORT HB5457** as an important step in keeping our vulnerable users of all types safe from motor vehicles.

Thank you in advance for **SUPPORTING** this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Alesia DiFederico  
Secretary Southbury Horse & Livestock Association