

Prepared Testimony of the City of New Haven
Respectfully submitted to the Transportation Committee
Public Hearing, March 3, 2010



City of New Haven
John DeStefano, Jr.
Mayor

RE: S.B. No. 345 (RAISED) AN ACT AUTHORIZING MUNICIPALITIES TO CONDUCT A PILOT PROGRAM FOR THE USE OF AUTOMATED TRAFFIC CONTROL SIGNAL ENFORCEMENT DEVICES AT CERTAIN INTERSECTIONS.

Senator DeFronzo, Representative Guerrero and members of the Committee, my name is Jim Travers and I am the deputy director of the Transportation Department for the City of New Haven. I appear before you to respectfully request your support for SE 345 and more specifically for provisions which will enable the City of New Haven to implement a red light traffic camera enforcement program.

Of the 10 largest cities in New England, New Haven has the highest percentage of residents who walk and/or bike to work. These users share intersection spaces with thousands of motor vehicles every day. Consequently, tragedies involving pedestrians and cyclists often occur at intersections – a shared space with many turning movements and where traditional traffic enforcement is challenging.

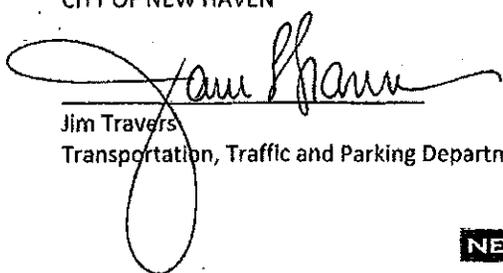
To give you a sense for our challenge, we record bicycle and pedestrian counts at key intersections. Last fall, at one sample location, in just one hour, we counted over 1,300 pedestrians and 74 cyclists. At this same location – Elm and York Streets – there were 33 recorded crashes in 2009. These are phenomenal numbers which lend to the urgency of our petition to protect vulnerable users.

Recognizing that technology alone will not improve public safety, the City has aggressively implemented the Street Smarts outreach program, traffic enforcement campaigns and traffic calming solutions. This year, the City is completing the state's first Complete Street Design Manual. The manual represents a major step forward in asserting the rights of all users of the roadways, and particularly our most vulnerable pedestrians and bicyclists. These are meaningful steps forward which demonstrate the comprehensive nature of our effort.

I understand the Legislature had many concerns about red light cameras. Since this matter was first introduced in 2006, the technology has firmly established itself. Over 421 communities across the nation now utilize some form of red light camera technology and another 47 have advanced to speed enforcement with cameras. The technology and program protocols are now firmly established and it is truly time for Connecticut to take the necessary next step and implement red light enforcement programs.

Thank you for your time today and I am available to answer any questions you may have.

CITY OF NEW HAVEN


Jim Travers
Transportation, Traffic and Parking Department

NEW HAVEN IT ALL HAPPENS HERE