

TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF S.B. 346

BY THE CONNECTICUT CITIZENS TRANSPORTATION LOBBY

FOR THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING ON 3/3/10

The Connecticut Citizens Transportation Lobby strongly supports the installation of speed detecting cameras on highways.

Highway safety is greatly enhanced when photo enforcement is employed. These cameras have been used beginning in the 1970's in about 40 foreign countries and in over 40 jurisdictions in the USA . The results are striking. In England there are over 6000 road safety cameras and at installation sites, speeding has been reduced by 30% and *fatalities* by 42%. In Australia after installing photo radar, within three months the number of drivers triggering the cameras was cut in half. In an Arizona program average speed was cut by 9%, single-vehicle collisions by 63%, and injuries by 48%.

In 2009 the State Police and the Governor argued strongly in favor of these cameras as being a "force multiplier," freeing officers to enforce other infractions such as tail-gating and illegal lane-changing. The number of vehicles on the road and the number of miles travelled increase yearly, while the number of state police does not increase at a rate adequate for effective enforcement of our speed limits. Crowded , dangerous conditions combined with other competing duties of the troopers have resulted in blatant disregard of our laws, extremely unsafe highways, and lowered productivity.

The issue of privacy seems to us a red herring raised by opponents. In these dangerous times, cameras are everywhere in our lives: on city streets, in convenience stores, banks , airports. It is true that it is not illegal to drive on our highways; it is illegal to speed on them. If you do not speed, your license plate will not be photographed.

When considering legislation introducing speed detection cameras in Connecticut, we must consider possible public reaction. The cameras should be regarded and described as an important tool in improving highway safety. There have been reports that some motorists in Arizona and England complain they are merely a new tax . It is important that our legislation require this revenue be used to defray installation, maintenance, and citation collection costs, and should be so presented to the public in an education campaign.

CT-CTL would suggest a pilot program in southwestern Connecticut on Interstate 95 from the New York border to Bridgeport. This section is the most heavily travelled and presents the fewest areas where state police can safely stop speeding trucks and cars.

Jill Kelly and Carol Leighton, Co-chairs of CT-CTL