

Testimony in Support of HB 6152

I live on Route136 in the Town of Fairfield. It's an idyllic country road that meanders through the woods along the Aspetuck River in the towns of Easton, Fairfield and Westport. I and many of the residents in the area have seen our residential road has become a major highway over the years. While we have a few safety concerns none is as obvious as the increasing number of trucks using our road.

The short story is there are too many illegal trucks traveling along Route136. The current law is vague and difficult, if not impossible, for our police officers to enforce. Some truck drivers don't understand the No thru Truck law, while others believe they are above the law.

I've personally witnessed dozens of trucks violating the no thru truck law in one or more of the towns protected by the law. As this issue is very important to me and the residents that live in the area, I've personally reached out to the trucking companies advising them of the road restriction. Some were unaware of the truck prohibition or didn't understand what it means and told me they would talk to their drivers about it, while others claim it's the best road to take to get to I-95 or I-84 or any point up or down county and they don't care about obeying the law. As one firm put it, no one has ever given them a ticket and until they do they will continue to use the road and even after that I might still take my chances. I work from home frequently and over the past few years I've logged a daily average of 26 large trucks driving by my home on the day's I'm there. Large trucks are not peapod or landscaper pickup trucks, they are big tri-axel and mutli-ton vehicles that are designed to carry only one maybe two deliveries, making it highly improbably if not impossible to be conducting business in all three town. I've also seen tractor trailers from major box stores whose nearest stores are several towns north or south of our neighborhood as well as semis carrying large equipment and industrial machinery. I've provided pictures of these types of vehicles so you to get a sense of the scale and scope of the problem.

The potential impact to the environment is also of great concern to us. Route136 cuts through the Hemlock Reservoir watershed and the road itself crosses the northern end of the reservoir coming within a matter of feet of the drinking water. This reservoir supplies water to a large portion of Fairfield County. Just imagine the environmental impact on our drinking water these vehicles would cause if they have an accident or some mechanical failure on the road in the middle of our water supply. These are the same types of trucks that the Connecticut State Troopers began cracking down on last summer and in the first two weeks of their efforts they recorded numerous violations including overweight vehicle violations and brake and tire deficiencies. It raises the question are they using local roads like our road to avoid such scrutiny in addition to getting from point A to point B faster?

The dangers these trucks pose to the commuters, children waiting at bus stops and the potential environmental impact to the reservoir and river is enormous. You can ask the young family that just moved in across the street from me, the 94 year old widow who's lived on the road for 62 years or anyone in between we all will agree this is a serious problem and something needs to be done. Upgrading the law to a full ban of trucks will improve the safety of the road for commuters driving to work and residents entering/exiting driveways and for all the people who love to bicycle and jog on the road. It will also dramatically improve our quality of life by reducing the noise and pollution these trucks produce.

Thank you for your time.

Donald A. Beach III
401 Westport Turnpike
Fairfield, Connecticut

Statements of Support for HB 6152

We, Lori and Nate Dougall, would like to express our support for the ban of trucks on Rt 136. These trucks not only cause traffic disruption but are dangerous on our small country roads.

Rt 136 was not built with the intention of it being a truckers thruway. We would like for the state to protect our children, roads and many bikers by supporting this bill.

With Regard,
Lori and Nate Dougall

Kindly let Representative Kim Fawcett know that I am in full support of upgrading the current NON Thru Truck prohibition. Unfortunately I know personally the horrors of RT 136 as my family lost our daughter in a traffic accident on one of its curves. Another family suffered the same fate as their child was also killed in the same area of RT 136. The road was not designed for high speeds or large trucks. Thank you in advance for your help keeping us safe.

Linda Mandell

This email is to inform Representative Kim Fawcett that I support all efforts that are being made with reference to Route 136 and the ban on trucks. I live at 80 Easton Road, Westport, CT.

Sincerely,
Cornelia Parchment-Horn
917-658-3014

I received a letter from Donald Beach about the problem of trucks using Route 136 as a short cut to Interstate 95 or 86. This is a long-standing problem with which I'm very familiar since I've been here since 1949. Years ago people got together and had someone follow trucks with a video camera to demonstrate the problem, and we managed to keep the problem to a minimum. At that time the trucks were using Easton Road as a shortcut to a gravel pit, as I remember. I'm definitely in favor of doing whatever is possible to address the problem. I live just below the junction of Coleytown Road and Easton Road and am well aware of how the trucks barrel along on what is a narrow country road in spite of its being a state highway by definition.

Peggy Rabut
104 Easton Road, Westport
peggyrabut@gmail.com

We have been notified by neighbors regarding the 2/23/11 public hearing regarding HB6152 to ban trucks on Route 136.

Thank Kim for proposing this- yes! This is a necessary thing.
We, like many neighbors, live in an old, historic house- ours built in 1919.
Many others on the road date back to the 1700's.
All the houses are very close to the road.

Whenever trucks go by all the windows rattle and the house shakes.
This can't possibly be good for the structure or foundation.

In addition- during morning and evening rush hour it is a life threatening situation trying to get out of the driveway. A steady stream of speeding trucks in addition to the cars is not helping.

The road is narrow and winding with blind turns.
I have lost count of the accidents I have seen on this street since I moved here in 2003- including one where a vehicle mowed down the 35mph speed limit sign and went down the bank into my yard. My neighbor had the same experience when someone missed the corner and landed in his yard in a ditch.

Thanks for your help!

Barbara Zionce
Darrell Mell
880 Westport Rd (Route 136)
Easton, CT
203 254-7807
bzionce@gmail.com

I am a resident at 753 Westport Road (route 136) in Easton, just a quarter mile from the Weston/Fairfield border. I have been appalled for many years about the heavy truck traffic on this road, a road that is clearly posted as "no thru trucks". Several times a week I go for a 4 mile jog with my dog Maverick. The first 300 yards is very scary until I can get to Redding Road and less travelled roads. But, ironically even this road which also bans thru trucks has many violators. There basically is no shoulder in many places on 136 because the road width takes up all the space between sloping embankments, so even if I try to get off the road in these places, I can't.

When I am talking about trucks, I mean big trucks, especially the 3 axel Mack trucks carrying dirt and gravel to constructions sites. Since these trucks are not allowed on the Merritt, they take 136 even though it is posted.

A couple of years ago, I spent some time during the weekday planting pachysandra in the apron between the road and the stone wall where my property runs along 136. There was about 12 feet of working space. It's quite something when you're on your hands and knees digging in the ground and a Mack truck barrels past you at 40 miles per hour. And it happens 5-10 times per hour, at least in the spring and early summer.

I applaud the Town of Fairfield for taking some action against these violators; my own town, Easton, is reluctant to do anything. I am not sure what the difference is between posting a road as "no thru trucks" and a "truck ban", but either way it needs to be enforced by the towns and there needs to be a large enough penalty to be a real deterrent.

Reducing the heavy truck traffic on route 136 is first and foremost a safety issue, for other cars, school busses as well as pedestrians who can't avoid the road. It's a dangerous road as it is, made much worse by the heavy trucks.

Sincerely,

Roger Echols
753 Westport Road (Rt 136)
Easton, CT 06612
203-259-2603
rechols@id3c.com

Dear Representative Kim Fawcett,

Please take note that my husband and I are very much in favor of the proposed legislation (HB 6152) which would upgrade the current No Thru Truck prohibition on Route 136 in Westport to a full Truck Ban. Most of Easton Road is residential and our area in Westport is in a school zone with sidewalks that are used by many children and families walking to school. We believe this legislation would make the road much safer for our children and those of our neighbors.

Thank you.

Jane and Peter Jordan
31 Easton Road
Westport, CT 06880

I am a resident at 675 Westport Tpke. (Rt.136) in Fairfield, Ct. This e-mail is in support of the truck ban on Rt. 136. I also would like it to be known that the speed limit on 136 is being completely ignored, and it has become a speedway at rush hour. There is also a pressing need for a flashing light to alert drivers on 136 to slow down at the intersection of Sturges Highway and 136 since cars coming out of Surges cannot see cars coming on 136. I am very aware of this since I was almost hit coming out of

Sturges! I strongly fear that this is a serious accident about to happen and could result in serious injury or death.

Thank you,
Pat Maxwell
The Higgins Group
278 Post Road East
Westport, CT 06880
203-494-0142
maxwellps@yahoo.com

First, many thanks to Rep. Kim Fawcett for fielding emails related to HB 6152.

Although HB 6152 may seem to be a mostly local issue, in reality it is a regional issue due to the geographical diversity of drivers on Route 136.

I live at the intersection of Route 136 and 11 Judges Hollow Road in Fairfield Ct.

As you know, Route 136 is a very narrow dangerous road which has a large volume of commuter traffic (school bus, student drivers, Fairfield County employees, residents etc) from early in the morning and extending throughout the evening. Due to the dangers of Rte 136, I require my 16 year old son, when driving from Westport to Fairfield, to avoid a long section of Route 136 in favor of the circumvented route of Cross Hwy to Redding Road to Judges Hollow Rd.

On one side of Rte 136, there is a steep topographical incline which drains water onto the Rte 136 roadway causing black ice in the winter and large puddles in the summer. On the other side, is the Aspetuck River which in some places comes within several feet of the roadway.

Additionally, due to the historic nature of Rte 136 there are many blind driveways and homes which directly abut or are in direct proximity to the roadway.

Due to the narrowness of the roadway and the close proximity of both roadside homes and a river, out of control vehicles could potentially end up either in the river or in a living room.

A ban on non essential truck traffic would protect everyone, including residents of Westport, Fairfield, Shelton, Newtown, Redding, Easton, Danbury etc from a potentially dangerous situation.

Thank you for your time and focus,
Robert F. Corroon Jr.

Just a note of support for HB6152.

Thanks,
Mr. Edward Travers
93 Easton Rd Westport, CT
203-227-5414.

I am in receipt of the Route 136 traffic safety legislation notice regarding the frequent and illegal truck traffic on our "no thru truck" road. As a resident of Easton Road (Rt. 136) I am very concerned.

I'm supportive of the proposed legislation (HB 6152) to upgrade the current prohibition on Route 136 to a truck ban. This would certainly make our road safer and our neighborhood a more pleasant place to live.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,
Jodi Perno
106 Easton Road
Westport, CT 06880
T: 203-222-7887

As a resident living on Easton Rd. in Westport, I am in favor of a ban on commercial trucks travelling through Route 136. Therefore, I support Rep. Fawcett's proposed legislation (HB 6152) for a Truck Ban.

Thank you,
Robert S. Frank
158 Easton Road
Westport, CT 06880

I support a complete ban on trucks on Rt 136 other than those that are in the area for a specific service. My house is at the corner of Rt 136 and Bayberry Lane and I experience first hand how trucks that use the road as a thorough fare make it very dangerous for all other motorists.

Thanks,
Ramesh Subramanian
293 Bayberry Lane
Westport, CT 06880
(203) 454-4317

Dear Representative Fawcett, Please treat the below as my letter to be read/submitted in support of your bill to ban trucks on Route 136 in Westport, Fairfield & Easton

I moved to Easton in December 2000 to a house built in 1765 that sits at the corner of Route 136 and Center Road. Located a few feet away from my house is a sign that reads "Thru Trucks Prohibited". That prohibition, however, was almost totally ignored by truckers. We I went to the Easton Police Department they began to attempt to enforce the prohibition, but with little success. One of the problems was/is that the truckers would provide a "bogus" address and the police would let them go. The Police Department in conjunction with the State DOT also began conducting an annual truck check in Easton on Route 136. Although word gets out within an hour between the truckers that there is a truck inspection, each year the truck inspection has resulted in between \$5,800.00 and \$38,500.00 in fines. I have been told by a reliable source that one of the major reasons that these truckers use Route 136, a back road, is to avoid the DOT inspectors that are routinely located on our major highways

One trucking company, which owns 4 triaxle dump trucks was passing my house, during the height of the construction boom, in one direction or the other about every 1/2 hour during weekdays and at a lesser rate on weekends including Sundays. While the police did catch him a few times and issue him the \$78.00 ticket for the violation that did not put a dent in his violations. Because I am either fortunate or unfortunate to be a maritime lawyer I personally brought a civil action in the Superior Court and obtained an injunction against two truckers to prohibit their illegal use of Route 136. That action is entitled Lovejoy v. John Burtsche and George Matar, CV-06-50046595-S. Had I been representing a client their legal bill would have totalled approximately \$26,000.00. While that legal action has deterred some illegal truck activity it still remains very high.

The real issue here is safety. While the speed limit on Route 136 ranges between 20 and 30 m.p.h. Route 136 is narrow and winding following the Saugatuck River in large measure. Near my house it drops suddenly immediately prior to the intersection. These huge triaxals run between 40 and 50 m.p.h. I use Route 136 on also a daily basis going to my bank in Westport, my boat in Norwalk, to the courthouse in Stamford or to catch the train in Darien. On no fewer than four dozen occasions in the past ten years I have been coming around a curve on Route 136 only to find a box truck, tractor trailer or tri-axle over the center line and substantially in my half of the road. Fortunately, each time I have been able to head for the ditch and get out of the trucks way. Late year the was a collision north of my house between a dump truck and a panel van. The an axle on the dump truck broke because it was over loaded. The panel van was removed quickly; however, because of the dip and curve in the road in took over two hours to remove the dump truck. In conclusion, Route 136 is an Avon Mountain waiting to happen. It was designated a no thru truck road in 1967 for a reason and because the truckers have decided to ignore that bam I believe your bill should be passed to put more teeth in such a restriction.

Thank you, Frederick A. Lovejoy

I would like you to consider the vote for the passage of HB 6152. My family resides on Mile Common in Easton, CT. Our street has direct access on to Rt 136. We travel this road daily and have encountered the many trucks that use this roadway. Just trying to pull out onto Rt 136 you take your life in your hands. Some of the issues I have dealt with are speeding trucks, trucks coming into my lane and being tailgated because I was following the speed limit.

Our neighborhoods have become shortcuts to I-95 and I-84. Keeping these large trucks off Rt 136 would help resolve the issue of excess trucks in our neighborhoods. I have no problem with local trucks that are used for local deliveries that enhance our commerce and provide services.

Along 136 we have some of the oldest homes in the area. These families have children and pets that play in their front yards. I am concerned for the safety of these residents. While this truck traffic has increase over the past several years, the noise and air quality from these trucks causes problems for us and our homes. If I can help my neighbors solve this problem with HB6152 that would be wonderful.

Thank you for your time.

Theresa D'Ausilio
124 Mile Common
Easton, Ct 06612
