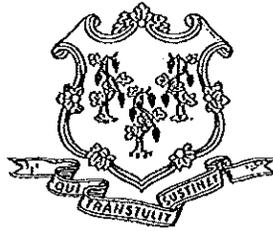


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State of Connecticut
SENATE

Chair
Higher Education & Employment
Advancement Committee

Member
Education Committee
Internship Committee
Judiciary Committee

February 14, 2011

Testimony to the Transportation Committee
Senate Bill 720:
An Act Creating Penalties For Causing Harm To,
Or The Death Of, A Vulnerable User Of A Public Way

Senator Maynard, Representative Guerrero, and Members of the Transportation Committee,

My name is Beth Bye, State Senator for the 5th district, representing West Hartford, Farmington, Burlington and Bloomfield.

I am here today to testify in support of Senate Bill 720. This concept came before you and was passed by this committee last year, then overwhelmingly passed the house 140-3 before stalling on the Senate calendar.

Roads and public ways are being increasingly designed to support all types of traffic. This bill recognizes that each user of a road, regardless of their method of transportation, is deserving of protection from aggressive, dangerous, or negligent driving. The penalties proposed in this bill are not severe. But they are enough they will serve to educate drivers who are not cautious in constantly surveying their surroundings.

Whether they're in wheelchairs, walking, cycling, skating, or working, the design of our modern roadways and communities is creating an environment where non-car traffic is increasing. I believe that we need a law which accounts for this increase and requires driver education training to occur sooner than after two or three moving violations as specified by law.

I am also happy to support this bill on behalf of advocates, particularly for the disabled, who believe that this bill will raise awareness to the fact that being a pedestrian on the side of a roadway, especially on these narrow, snow-blocked roads, is oftentimes discomfoting, and sometimes dangerous. I believe this bill raises awareness to the fact that public roads are not just for cars anymore, and I appreciate the committee's support.

Thank You