



City of New Haven

200 Orange Street G3
New Haven, CT 06510

John DeStefano, Jr.
Mayor

James Travers
Interim Director

RE: Testimony in Support for Proposed S.B. No. 706, Proposed S.B. No. 822, Proposed H.B. No. 6178, and Proposed H.B. No. 6179

Senator Maynard, Representative Guerrera and members of the Transportation Committee, my name is Jim Travers and I am the Interim Director of the Transportation Department for the City of New Haven. I appear before you to respectfully request your support for SB 706, SB 822, HB 6178, HB 6179, and bills 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.

Enabling the City of New Haven to utilize red light cameras would help New Haven provide safer road ways for our residents. Evidence has shown the use of red light cameras have a deterring effect, and immediately have shown to reduce the amount of violators. A study from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, released February 1, found that in the 14 cities that had cameras during 2004-08, the combined per capita rate of fatal red light running crashes fell 35 percent, compared with 1992-96. The rate also fell in the 48 cities without camera programs in either period, but only by 14 percent. The use of red light cameras will be one of the tools to help New Haven provide safe streets; the city has aggressively implemented the Street Smarts outreach program, traffic enforcement campaigns and traffic calming solutions.

I understand the Legislature has 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. 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. The passage of these bills would greatly aid the City of New Haven to providing a safe environment for people using New Haven road ways.

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