



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Office of the
Commissioner

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Public Hearing -- March 7, 2011 Transportation Committee

Testimony Submitted by Acting Commissioner James P. Redeker Department of Transportation

S.B. 772 - An Act Providing for the Installation of "Wrong Way" Tire Spikes at the End of Limited Access Highway Ramps.

While the Department of Transportation (Department) supports the intent of S.B. 772 to prevent accidents by vehicles attempting to enter limited access highways through exit ramps, we do not endorse the use of tire puncturing devices to prevent wrong-way access. The Department's experience to date on wrong-way incidents has been that they are random occurrences/events at exit ramps and do not typically indicate a problem pattern at any specific location.

Physically disabling a vehicle's ability to move, such as upon entering an off-ramp the wrong way, could potentially place motorists in danger of being hit head-on by traffic that is utilizing the exit ramp. This includes the occasional driver who turns onto an off-ramp in the wrong direction, immediately realizes his error and needs to turn around. In addition, emergency vehicles sometimes need to travel the wrong way on a ramp to answer calls for assistance on the expressway. Snow plowing of exit ramps would also be affected by the presence of tire puncture devices.

Although the Department does not recommend the use of tire puncturing devices, the Department does install and maintain signs and pavement markings on highway entrance and exit ramps, in accordance with standards set forth by the Federal Highway Administration, including "Wrong Way", "Do Not Enter" and "One Way" signs. ConnDOT also provides further protection by utilizing a special sheeting material on "wrong way" signs that are of a higher reflective intensity than what is federally required for those signs.

ConnDOT estimates a significant fiscal impact should the bill pass. Based on the 760 exit ramps from limited access highways in the State, the installation of tire puncturing devices on all off ramps could be expected to cost approximately \$22 million.

For further information or questions, please contact Pam Sucato, Legislative Program Manager for the Department of Transportation at (860) 594-3013.