

**Testimony On Behalf Of The  
Connecticut Regional Office of the  
Anti-Defamation League**

**IN SUPPORT OF RAISED BILL NO. 364  
AN ACT CONCERNING TRAFFIC STOP INFORMATION**

**March 12, 2012**

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) was founded in 1913 with a mandate to fight the defamation of the Jewish people and secure justice and fair treatment for all. Today the ADL is one of the country's leading civil rights and human services organizations. The Connecticut Regional Office of ADL is based in Hamden and serves the entire state of Connecticut.

We submit this testimony today to express our support for Raised Bill No. 364, An Act Concerning Traffic Stop Information.

A critical element of ADL's mission of seeking justice and fair treatment for *all* people compels us to combat bias and discrimination in whatever form it takes and against whomever it may be directed. Others here today will describe in greater detail the discrimination some individuals face in the context of traffic stops and the impact of racial and ethnic profiling on minority communities. In our experience advocating for victims of discrimination and responding to bias incidents of all types throughout the state, however, discrimination against *any* individual or group of people not only hurts the individuals and targeted groups, but negatively impacts the environment in which it arises and the community as a whole. In other words, we all suffer when any group experiences bigotry or discrimination.

As a result of ADL's extensive and meaningful partnership with law enforcement in Connecticut and around the country, we know that most law enforcement officers are to be commended for their professionalism and service to the community. We are confident that most officers would never practice or condone the use of inappropriate profiling as a criterion for criminal suspicion. However, there is abundant evidence suggesting that minority motorists are stopped for pretextual reasons and questioned by law enforcement officers disproportionately more often than white motorists. The use of race, ethnicity or any such criterion as a basis for criminal suspicion in making traffic stops undermines public trust in law enforcement, widens the great gulf that exists between white and minority perceptions of judicial fairness, and is a violation of the motorist's civil rights.

Securing civil rights and opposing stereotyping based on immutable characteristics are essential components of the Anti-Defamation League's historic mandate. We believe that Bill No. 364 will help way to ensure that information about traffic stops is properly tracked, can be properly analyzed, and can serve as a more effective tool to end the use of racial and ethnic profiling.

While we believe that the strengthening of the law addressing racial profiling is essential, we understand that law enforcement may have procedural or logistical concerns relating to the

mechanics of data collection and dissemination. We hope the Committee will consider those concerns and work with law enforcement to resolve them so that the critical objectives of this bill can be achieved while allowing police officers to continue to fulfill their important duties.

We urge you to support Bill No. 364 to strengthen and make effective Connecticut's laws concerning traffic stops and racial profiling and to send a clear message that our state will not allow anyone to suffer discrimination simply because of the country they come from or the color of their skin.