

*Dean M. Esserman
Chief of Police*

NEW HAVEN DEPARTMENT OF POLICE SERVICE

One Union Avenue • New Haven • Connecticut • 06519



*John DeStafano, Jr.
Mayor*

March 8, 2012

RE: Testimony in Support of 5458

Dear Senator Maynard, Representative Guerrero and members of the Transportation Committee:

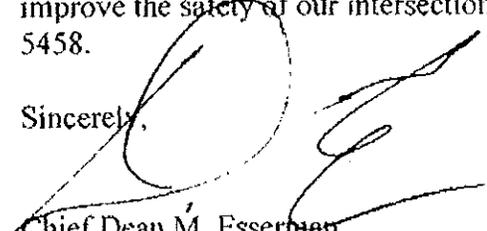
My name is Dean Esserman and I am the Chief of Police in New Haven. I write today to voice my strong support for Bill number 5458, which would enable the City of New Haven to implement red light safety cameras.

New Haven has many busy intersections where red light running poses a serious public safety risk to drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians. In 2011, there were 5,644 accidents in the city and eight fatalities. The potential for serious accidents caused by red light running drivers at busy intersections throughout the city is obvious. Indeed, in just the last year, two of my own officers' patrol cars have been hit by red light running drivers. To address this situation and better protect our citizens, New Haven would like the option to utilize red light traffic cameras.

The evidence that red light safety cameras work to change driver behavior and reduce serious accidents is clear. According to a recent study by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, the use of red light cameras from 2004-2008 in 14 U.S. cities saved 159 lives and reduced the rate of fatal red light running crashes by 35 percent. Had other cities, including those in Connecticut, been using red light safety cameras during this time period, a total of 815 deaths could have been avoided.

Red light safety cameras work and are currently in use in 555 communities in 24 states and the District of Columbia. The City of New Haven believes that the use of red light cameras will improve the safety of our intersections and save lives. That is why I ask you to please support 5458.

Sincerely,



Chief Dean M. Esserman

Dedicated to Protecting Our Community

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