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Transportation Committee
300 Capitol Ave Room 2300 LOB
Hartford CT 06106

February 22, 2012

Distinguished Members of the Committee,

The Connecticut Horse Council would like to strongly urge this committee to support **SB 111 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PENALTY FOR CAUSING HARM TO A VULNERABLE USER OF A PUBLIC WAY.**

In today's hectic world road rage and reckless driving are a common occurrence. Unfortunately motorists are sharing the road with pedestrians, bicyclists and equestrians; and when you have a collision, the car "always" wins. On occasion, our members ride on the shoulders of roads in order to access one trail from another. Or, they are riding on rural roads with lighter traffic. Despite riders being cautious and following the rules of the road, it is a losing proposition when a motorist is acting dangerously.

Horse Council frequently receives reports from our members about near accidents caused by motorists who either are ignorant of the laws, or more often, simply choose to be aggressive and reckless. In previous years I have stated to this committee that I was dreading the day when I received a call informing me that one of our members has been killed or sustained terrible injuries due to a collision with a vehicle. I am deeply saddened to report that this very call came during the summer, after this bill had failed last session.

One of our founding Volunteer Horse Patrol members, Dr. Linda Perry and her horse Trapper Jake Mint, were riding home on the shoulder of a secondary road, when they were struck by an SUV. They were slammed into a tree-the impact impaling Lynda, and mortally wounding Trapper. It is my understanding that the driver was issued a \$50.00 citation for this incident.

Horse Council has worked for many years to educate motorists about sharing the roads and we have created the "Roadsafe" brochure along with other materials to hand out. Unfortunately, our Roadsafe program can do so much about this issue. Again, we would like to encourage this committee to vote in support of SB 111.

Sincerely,
Amy Stegall
President, Connecticut Horse Council
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