



PEDRO E. SEGARRA  
MAYOR

**Testimony by Mayor Pedro E. Segarra  
City of Hartford  
House Bill 5458**

**An Act Concerning Municipal Automated Traffic Enforcement Safety Devices at Certain Intersections  
March 12, 2012, 10:00AM in Hearing Room 1E**

Co-Chairmen Maynard and Guerrero, Ranking Members Boucher and Scribner, Vice-Chairmen Duff and Mikutel and Members of the Transportation Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to present testimony on House Bill 5458, An Act Concerning Municipal Automated Traffic Enforcement Safety Devices at Certain Intersections. I am honored today to not only testify not on behalf of the City of Hartford, but also on behalf of my many colleagues, friends and members of the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities.

Let me be the first to say that my support of this concept is not because of the anticipated revenues that it would generate. In fact, I believe that this argument is the least compelling reason to support this particular bill. I support red light cameras because it will add another variable to the decision-making process of those who chose to recklessly run red lights and endanger fellow passengers, pedestrians and other drivers. In short, this is an essential deterrence measure that will benefit, in particular, Connecticut's largest urban areas, including its Capitol City: Hartford.

As elected officials we are all acutely aware that our police departments are not remotely capable of stationing a car or officer at every intersection. In the City of Hartford we have over 230 signalized intersections and a sworn department staff size of about 450 (total capacity is 460)<sup>i</sup>. This bill would provide us an additional tool to guarantee enforcement, while potentially preserving the safety of our men and women in uniform, pedestrians and other drivers.

The argument oft used by opponents of this measure is that that many municipalities have had to terminate contracts, generally because of unfavorable terms. I will only say that if a contractor/service provider, after a competitive process and through review and analysis, is unable to produce a proposal that will maximize taxpayer and resident benefit, than municipal leaders are not bound to sign it. This bill, like most good legislation, simply allows municipalities the option – and not a requirement or mandate – to install red light cameras.

In your Capital City, for example, despite investing thousands in new signals and traffic signalization changes, over the last 5 years the Hartford Police Department has issued hundreds of tickets for running a red light or failing to properly obey a traffic signal. And while we are attempting to retrieve the numbers from the Department of Transportation and Department of Motor Vehicles, I suspect that over that same period of time, Hartford has borne witness to over a handful of motor vehicle accidents that have resulted from a driver failing to recognize a red light. Isn't it only right and proper to finally give Hartford, Putnam, New Haven, Torrington, Stamford and all other Connecticut cities and towns the option and ability to embrace a technology that could help prevent accidents and save lives?

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this important piece of legislation. The City of Hartford urges favorable passage of House Bill 5458.

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<sup>i</sup> A class of 27 recruits recently started and is expected to be completed in September.