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# State of Connecticut

## SENATE

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HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

**SENATOR KEVIN D. WITKOS**  
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Good Morning Senator Maynard, Representative Guerrera, Senator Boucher, Representative Scribner and distinguished members of the Transportation Committee.

I wanted to thank you for raising SB 103 for a public hearing. I also wanted to remind you that I did submit a letter to the chairs and ranking members of the committee with substitute language.

This bill concept found its way to me via a police officer in my district who is additionally certified as a mountain bike patrolman. The officer explained that recent legislation by this body to provide a 3 foot safety zone that motorists must yield to cyclists when overtaking them never reduced the law allowing cyclists to ride two abreast. By our legislative action, we created a situation where motorists must break the law when passing cyclists riding two abreast, that law being failure to drive in an established lane.

After the proposed bill came out, the advocates schooled me in the pleasure of riding with others. An argument was made that the proposed bill is not necessary as the current law prohibits cyclists from impeding normal traffic flow.

I believed that phrase to be quite ambiguous so I contacted the State's Attorney Office to see how it would be interpreted in court. I was told it depended on which prosecutor I spoke with as the law was vague. I shared with the State's Attorney Office that I had researched and found language in New York that accomplished my goal, that being safe roads for all. It was shared with me that they liked (SAO) the language in New York and it would clarify the law in Connecticut such that they would support it.

No one's right to use our public highways has been diminished under this proposal and it certainly speaks in plain language what each operators responsibility is on our roadways.

I'd be happy to answer any questions the committee members may have.

Very truly yours,

Kevin Witkos



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The Honorable Andrew Maynard  
The Honorable Antonio Guerrero  
The Honorable Toni Boucher  
The Honorable David Scribner  
Transportation Committee, Room 2300  
Legislative Office Building  
300 Capitol Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06106

January 28, 2013

Re: Proposed Senate Bill 103

To the Distinguished Leaders of the Transportation Committee,

I recently received a request from a Simsbury Police Officer who is also certified as a PTMB (Patrol Mountain Bike) officer to make a technical change to a law that the legislature passed.

The officer advised that when the legislature created a three foot safe zone when overtaking bicycles that motorists must yield, the legislature never required the cyclists to ride single file. This may cause two cyclists to ride side by side with an additional three foot berth, thus causing the motorist to violate Connecticut General Statutes and be cited with "Failure to drive in the proper lane."

I introduced Senate Bill 103 to correct that measure and was immediately informed by the cycling community that the legislation already exists and the bill is not necessary. The question thus lies in what the intent of "impeding the roadway" means? I consulted the State's Attorney's Office and was told that it depends on which State's Attorney one speaks with because the law is unclear.

After conducting some research, I found a New York State Statute that I thought would address these concerns. After sharing the statute with the State's Attorney's Office, they confirmed that they would support the change in statute and would have someone come to the public hearing to testify in support of the new language.

I respectfully request the following substitute language be amended into SB 103:

*CGS Sec. 14-286b. (b) Persons riding bicycles or skating or gliding on in-line skates upon a roadway shall ride, skate, or glide single file when being overtaken by a vehicle. Persons riding two abreast, as provided in this subsection, shall not impede the normal and reasonable movement of traffic, and, on a laned roadway, shall ride within a single lane. The operator of a vehicle must provide a safe distance of not less than three feet when overtaking and passing a person riding a bicycle.*

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kevin Witkos".

Kevin Witkos  
State Senate – 8th District