



PEDRO E. SEGARRA
MAYOR

Testimony by Mayor Pedro E. Segarra
City of Hartford

Senate Bill 634, Senate Bill 637, House Bill 5554, House Bill 6056

Re: The Use of Electronic Monitoring Equipment at Intersections (or "Red Light Cameras")
February 25, 2013 10:00AM in Hearing Room 1E

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

Thank you for the opportunity to again submit testimony on several proposed bills that would allow municipalities to install red light cameras or other electronic monitoring equipment at intersections to improve public safety and prevent the running of red lights or failure to obey other critical traffic ordinances. I want to particularly thank Hartford's own, Representative Angel Arce, for his leadership and unwavering support of this concept.

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 or use a mobile device 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 and suburban areas, including its Capital City: Hartford.

As Hartford's chief elected official, I know that the Hartford Police Department is not 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 430 (total capacity is slightly more than 460)¹. 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 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. These bills, like most good legislation, simply allows municipalities the option – and not a requirement or mandate – to install red light cameras or like equipment.

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. 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 or texting while driving. Isn't it only right and proper to finally give Hartford, Fairfield, New Haven, Torrington, Stamford and other Connecticut cities and towns the option and ability to embrace a technology that could help prevent accidents and save lives?

While I recognize that discussions will continue long past today's public hearing, I thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of these important pieces of legislation.

¹ A class of approximately 30 recruits is anticipated to begin in the spring.

550 Main Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06103
Phone (860) 757-9500
Fax (860) 722-6606

