March 5, 2014

The Honorable Andrew Maynard
The Honorable Antonio Guerrero
Co-Chairpersons, Transportation Committee
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Re: SUPPORT for SB 336, the Vulnerable User Bill

Dear Chairmen Maynard and Guerrero:

Bike Walk Connecticut is a member-supported not-for-profit organization that works to make Connecticut a better place to bike and walk. We SUPPORT SB 336, An Act Concerning The Penalty For Causing Harm To A Vulnerable User Of A Public Way.

Thank you for again raising this important bill to help hold accountable careless drivers who injure or kill non-motorized users of the road.

Connecticut Cyclist and Pedestrian Crash Data 2006 – 2012

Federal and state data report that 10,793 pedestrians and cyclists were injured or killed in Connecticut from 2006 through 2012.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Bike/Ped Fatalities</th>
<th>Cyclist Fatalities</th>
<th>Pedestrian Fatalities</th>
<th>Total Bike/Ped Injuries</th>
<th>Cyclist Injuries</th>
<th>Pedestrian Injuries</th>
<th>Total Bike/Ped Injuries &amp; Fatalities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>1687</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>1108</td>
<td>1730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1820</td>
<td>655</td>
<td>1165</td>
<td>1856</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>1630</td>
<td>596</td>
<td>1034</td>
<td>1683</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1580</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>1036</td>
<td>1607</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>1357</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>1137</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1198</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>1030</td>
<td>1232</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1226</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>1016</td>
<td>1275</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>10,498</td>
<td>2972</td>
<td>7526</td>
<td>10,793</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A majority of these accidents deaths occur along “arterial” roadways--streets designed for speeding traffic with little or no provision for people on foot, on bicycles or in wheelchairs. Excessive speed, distracted driving, and sometimes outright driver hostility too often play a role in these tragedies.

Dozens of our members have been sharing their personal experiences with you about their adventures, and misadventures, as a cyclist or pedestrian trying to navigate Connecticut’s roads. We urge you to read their remarks and take them to heart.

Study after study reveals that more people would be willing to make more trips by bike or on foot if only they felt they could do so without taking their lives in their hands. Passing the Vulnerable User bill, then enforcing it, will raise awareness across the board about the need to be alert for the various users of our public roads.
This is the fifth year this bill has been proposed. In the last two years, the VU bill has had broad support and passed the Senate unanimously, but it was not brought to a vote in the House in either year.

Vulnerable User legislation is good public policy. Making Connecticut a better, safer place to bike and walk will reduce traffic congestion; create more vibrant town centers; save money; and give us cleaner air and a healthier population. We urge you to vote in favor of the Vulnerable User bill today and help move this bill across the finish line this year.

Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

Kelly Kennedy
Executive Director
Bike Walk Connecticut

Sources:

- [http://www.ctcrash.uconn.edu/](http://www.ctcrash.uconn.edu/)
- [http://t4america.org/tag/dangerous-by-design](http://t4america.org/tag/dangerous-by-design)