

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.

Year	Total Bike/Ped Fatalities	Cyclist Fatalities	Pedestrian Fatalities	Total Bike/Ped Injuries	Cyclist Injuries	Pedestrian Injuries	Total Bike/Ped Injuries & Fatalities
2006	43	5	38	1687	579	1108	1730
2007	36	5	31	1820	655	1165	1856
2008	53	6	47	1630	596	1034	1683
2009	27	1	26	1580	544	1036	1607
2010	53	7	46	1357	220	1137	1410
2011	34	8	26	1198	168	1030	1232
2012	49	4	45	1226	210	1016	1275
Total	295	36	259	10,498	2972	7526	10,793

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.

**Bike Walk Connecticut**

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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.fars.nhtsa.dot.gov/>
- <http://www.ctcrash.uconn.edu/>
- <http://www.tstc.org/reports/danger12/>
- <http://t4america.org/tag/dangerous-by-design>

