



February 5, 2015

Testimony RE: HB 5538

Dear Senator Maynard, Representative Guerrero, honorable vice chairs and members of the Transportation Committee:

Elio Motors [www.eliomotors.com](http://www.eliomotors.com) will be manufacturing a two passenger, fully enclosed 3 wheeled, front wheel drive, gasoline powered vehicle which NHTSA will certify as a motorcycle. The vehicle will retail for an expected 6800.00 and will get 84 MPG Highway/49 City. It is engineered to the highest available safety standards and includes: a high strength roll cage (similar to a race car), front and side curtain airbags, 3 point safety restraints, ABS, Stability Control, Traction Control, and other safety enhancement equipment that you would normally find on an automobile. Standard equipment includes A/C, Power Windows, Door Lock and Radio. It is 90% North American content will be manufactured in the USA at our Shreveport, LA manufacturing facility—truly an American product.

**Registration issue:**

CT is the only state that currently won't allow registration of our autocycle. Current statute doesn't allow "enclosed 3 wheeled vehicles" to be registered as motorcycles. NHTSA will only certify 3 wheeled vehicles as "motorcycles"

**Endorsement Issue:**

Since NHTSA will certify as a motorcycle, exemptions for motorcycle operator's licenses are necessary:

- 1) AAMVA "strongly encourages jurisdictions to use these best practices (listed below) to promote uniformity. This will facilitate the movement of these vehicles from on jurisdiction to another"
  - A) Put autocycle in definition
  - B) Use 7x4 license plate
  - C) Require a regular automobile license to operate, no special license required
- 2) About 50% of the states have made these changes and the rest are actively seeking the exemptions this session. Currently 19 states have legislation in process this year. The remaining are researching the best way to handle the needed change.
- 3) CT honors other states motorcycle license, but if the other states don't require special licenses for autocycles, there would be nothing to honor. That puts visitors to CT with autocycles in danger of having their vehicle impounded if they don't have CT's required motorcycle license. AL

motorcycle operators aren't required to have a motorcycle license in AL and they are currently experiencing this problem that reciprocity doesn't address.

**Helmet Exemption (CT under the age of 18):**

- 1) Helmet use in enclosed vehicles reduce vision
- 2) Helmet use in enclosed vehicles reduce audio perception
- 3) Manufacturers do not consider the extra weight of a helmet (3-4lbs, which adds 30-40% to the weight of the head) when making the sensitive calibration required in deployment of airbags.
- 4) But ***MOST*** importantly, requiring helmets where occupants are also using the required 3 point safety restraints presents a situation that could result in grave consequences. Three point safety restraints prevent the body from moving forward, but not the head. The weight of the helmet will pull the head violently forward in a collision. It is widely accepted in the industry that the use of 3 point safety restraints while wearing helmets can easily result in severe whiplash at a minimum, paralysis or even death.

There are approximately 100 million old used vehicles on the roads today—vehicles at the end, or close to the end of their lifecycles. The average cost of these used vehicles is about 6-7 thousand, and they are getting about 17-18 MPG on the average. They are still on the roads today because the people that own them can't afford anything else. They can't afford electrics like the Tesla, Volt, Leaf or even a hybrid. It would be a shame if CT deprives its residents of owning a new vehicle that is safe, reliable, under warranty, fun to drive and saves them 4 times the fuel over their current old automobile, by not allowing registration of the Elio Autocycle.

As the transportation industry and innovative pioneers like Paul Elio move towards new platforms in an effort to reach mandated MPG requirements at a reasonable cost to the consumer, states need to adjust statute to reflect innovation of these new products. Representative Steinberg's legislation, HB 5538, makes those common sense adjustments. On behalf of many in CT who have preordered the Elio Autocycle and the many that soon will, I urge your support of HB 5538.

Sincerely,

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