

April 24, 2015

Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee

SUBJECT MATTER: H.B. No. 6840 AN ACT CONCERNING INVESTMENTS IN CONNECTICUT'S TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Testimony from the Connecticut Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Board (Authorized February 24, 2015)

The Connecticut Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board commends the Governor for the development of a much needed bold vision for transportation in Connecticut over the next 30 years. Let's Go CT is truly a multi modal proposal and is the first long range plan for the state that specifies funding for bicycle and pedestrian improvements. The bicycle and pedestrian aspects of the plan are integral parts of the vision, showcasing the Governor and Commissioners position on Complete Streets.

The \$101 million dedicated in the first five year ramp up to an urban bike/pedestrian network connectivity project and expansion of trails is truly impressive and represents 4% of the ramp up.

As proposed for the 30 year plan, bike and pedestrian funding comprises less than 1% of the total program. The Board suggests that this level of funding be increased. While the proposed 1% of funding for bicycle and pedestrian improvements is a vast improvement from previous funding levels, the Board is concerned that this level of funding maybe inadequate for achieving the very visionary goals of the plan, including:

- The safest bicycle and pedestrian systems in New England.
- Convenient travel for all residents and mode choices, such as those with special needs, including the elderly, people with disabilities, and those who are transit- dependent residents.
- A robust bicycle and pedestrian network to further improve Connecticut's high quality-of-life benefits and reverse the population trend of residents leaving Connecticut.
- Smart, sustainable Transit Oriented Development (TOD) with easy access to jobs, education, and options for living car-free.

Designing transportation systems for people who bike and/or walk is essential for a visionary transportation plan that seeks to transform our state, making it more livable and attractive to all ages. The millennial generation is choosing to live in places where there is a reduced need for single occupant vehicles. Retiring baby boomers are looking for urban style living where they can walk and bike to meet many of their needs. Our state economic development agencies are seeking to capture these markets. Transit oriented development requires safe, efficient, and attractive bicycle and pedestrian networks. The State should view transportation improvements of this nature as an investment to stimulate economic development.

Improving our state is all about making places and we urge all involved to focus upon the important role of transportation in place making and specifically the very important role of good biking and walking facilities for creating places where people want to live and work.

We urge all involved with moving the visionary Let's Go Plan forward to increase the amount of funding dedicated to bicycle and pedestrian projects and associated connections to transit so that the plan, and the state, can meet their goals.

Sincerely,

Neil Pade, Chair

Connecticut Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Board