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State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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*Testimony by Representative Mitch Bolinsky
Before the Insurance and Real Estate Committee
Supporting House Bill 6166
February 26, 2015*

My thanks to the Honorable Co-Chairs, Senator Crisco and Representative Megna; Ranking Members Senator Kelly and Representative Sampson; as well as the entire Insurance Committee for your consideration today of HB-6166, AN ACT INCREASING THE MOTOR VEHICLES MINIMUM FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY LIMITS UPON A CONVICTION OF DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE.

HB-6166 is a committee bill so, explaining its intent is secondary to my expressing my support for this concept. The State of Connecticut has been particularly tough on impaired-driving offenders and has seen a healthy decrease in the number of motor vehicle fatalities attributable to DUI over the past five-years. This measure takes aim at creating greater accountability for persons having prior DUI convictions – the repeat offenders, the most dangerous of impaired drivers and most likely to kill, injure or cause damage to public and private property.

Mandating an increased minimum financial responsibility, in the form of greater motor vehicle insurance limits of liability for this class of motor vehicle operator makes very good sense. In Connecticut, earning and maintaining a driver's license is a privilege, not a right. The state has a responsibility to protect the rights and safety of its law-abiding citizens and this bill does just that by requiring a greater minimum financial responsibility for those offending operators who have demonstrated a propensity to drive under the influence of alcohol, drugs or both, thereby presenting a clear and present danger to the general motoring public.

Please, advance HB-6166 and enable an amendment to the general statutes requiring individuals having been convicted of an offense while operating a motor vehicle under the influence of intoxicating liquor, drugs, or both, to purchase additional automobile insurance coverage with the committee bill's defining language: "If any person who is the holder of a motor vehicle operator's license has been convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or both, the commissioner shall require from such person proof of financial responsibility to satisfy any claim for damages..."

Thank you for your time and should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Respectfully,

Representative Mitch Bolinsky