



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE TERRY ADAMS
146TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM 4020
CAPITOL: (860) 240-8585
E-MAIL: Terry.B.Adams@cga.ct.gov

MEMBER
BANKING COMMITTEE
HOUSING COMMITTEE
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Rep. Terry Adams (D-Stamford) Testimony

Joint Committee on Judiciary
Wednesday, March 2, 2016

H.B. 5403 An Act Increasing Penalties For Failure To Yield To Pedestrians In Crosswalks And Failure To Exercise Due Care To Avoid Hitting A Pedestrian Or Cyclist.

Good afternoon Chairman Coleman, Chairman Tong and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to address the committee today.

My name is Terry Adams, representing Stamford's 146th Assembly District. I am here today to testify in support of H.B. 5403, An Act Increasing Penalties For Failure To Yield To Pedestrians In Crosswalks And Failure To Exercise Due Care To Avoid Hitting A Pedestrian Or Cyclist.

As public elected officials, we are entrusted with the duty of ensuring that our laws provide the highest level of safety to the residents of our state and the people we serve.

The bill that's before the committee addresses an important issue that affects the whole state. This is not only a public safety issue, but a measure that further enforces an otherwise common sense behavior among drivers. It is unfortunate that legislation that increases penalties is even necessary, but we must emphasize to careless drivers the seriousness of not complying with safe driving around vulnerable pedestrians and cyclists.

For too long, I have witnessed driver after driver ignore pedestrians trying to cross the street, particularly elderly and young children. This behavior can, and too often does, have life changing consequences for pedestrian car traffic victims. When I first introduced my bill, I thought about the five pedestrian fatalities that have occurred in Stamford alone which prompted me try to find a way to address this issue.

According to an Annual Report of the Uniform Crime Reporting Program from the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, there were 59 pedestrian related accidents in 2014 and of those, 47 were killed with five pedestrian fatalities that occurred in Stamford in that year.

These statistics are concerning.

Our pedestrians need to feel safe when trying to navigate our local streets. I have heard from constituents, and have witnessed the lack of regard some drivers show to pedestrians. This bill attempts to strengthen our public safety laws and at the same time bring attention to this issue that has been neglected for so long. With this bill, careless drivers will continue to pay the price until they get it.

I urge this committee to consider this matter, and thank you in advance for your attention.