

## Transportation Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-5429  
AN ACT CONCERNING PEDESTRIAN SAFETY, VISION ZERO COUNCIL,  
SPEED LIMITS IN MUNICIPALITIES, FINES AND CHARGES FOR CERTAIN  
VIOLATIONS, THE GREENWAYS COMMEMORATIVE ACCOUNT AND  
MAINTENANCE WORK ZONE AND SCHOOL ZONE SAFETY  
**Title:** ENFORCEMENT.  
**Vote Date:** 3/3/2021  
**Vote**  
**Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute  
**PH Date:** 1/27/2021  
**File No.:** 83

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### SPONSORS OF BILL:

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### REASONS FOR BILL:

To increase safety and awareness of the multi modal nature of Connecticut streets, particularly in densely populated urban areas; as a response the unfortunate increase of pedestrian accidents and related fatalities.

## RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None

## NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

### YALE

#### [Professors of Law \(Tracey Meares, Tom Tyler, & James Forman\)](#)

The testimony notes the importance of the unequal enforcement of traffic laws against Black and Hispanic motorists relative to their white peers, that race is playing a huge factor in traffic stops. The possibility of affecting the issue of "fairness" is then addressed with the following **"After the initial stop, police are more likely to escalate a traffic stop to a search when the motorist is Black or Hispanic than if they are white.<sup>5</sup> One study of Los Angeles police noted that they "were more likely to stop [B]lack motorists than non-Hispanic whites and, having stopped them, were more likely to make [B]lacks get out of their car, more likely to frisk [B]lacks, more likely to search their cars, and more likely to arrest them."** This is definitely a problem, especially because people are fearful to the point of getting out of their cars not knowing what might escalate between them and law enforcement. This disrupts communities, and as long as it continues to happen, it disrupts the flow of society. **"Perceptions of discrimination in discretionary stops can "erode individual liberty, undermine democratic equality, and divide local communities by income, race, and ethnicity."**

#### [Dean of Yale Law, Professor of Law \(Heather K. Gerken\)](#)

This testimony references the death of bicycles that have held such an tremendous impact on the state community. From Heather K. Gerken, she stated, **"As you might know, one of our beloved students, Chris Lim, died on October 6, 2020, in a tragic bicycle accident at the intersection of York Street and South Frontage Road in New Haven."** But it isn't just about the tragic loss of Chris, but it is about all the senseless deaths that occur every year due to the fact of careless drivers on the road, street smarts is very important when you are dealing with driving within the public landscape. **"What makes Chris' death all the more tragic was that he died in an utterly preventable accident. That fact has led a number of our students to devote countless hours to ensuring that our community does not lose another life to such a senseless tragedy."**

#### 3. [CEO of Yale Health, Associate Professor at Yale Medical \(Paul Genecin\)](#)

The testimony notes the importance of the pilot program for automated speed control, given the unacceptable number of pedestrian fatalities (65 in Connecticut in 2020) and what the text refers to as "our right to avoid preventable traffic-related deaths." The possibility of positively affecting the issue of "equity" is then addressed with the following: "Automated speed control provides an alternative to police enforcement, which can be arbitrary and disproportionately focused on racial minorities. This modality would make law enforcement more equitable and consistent across all members of the driver community." In conclusion, the testimony proposes that automated speed control be implemented in the vicinity of hospitals, not just schools.

### HOSPITALS

#### [Yale New Haven Hospital \(Contains Information on "Traffic Calming"\)](#)

The testimony references "traffic calming solutions" as "critical tools" for keeping Yale's employees, their families, and the greater community of New Haven safe—then concludes with the following: "As a Level 1

trauma facility, Yale New Haven Hospital often treats the direct and devastating effects of catastrophic injuries caused by motor vehicle accidents – injuries that can take an economic and emotional toll on individuals and families. The Yale New Haven Hospital family is not immune to this sort of horrific and painful loss."

[Connecticut Children's Medical Center \(Rahul Shah, MD\)](#)

This testimony references "to lower speed limits when appropriate and further promote pedestrian safety at crosswalks" as an critical tool to protect children and other individuals from cars speeding down the street way too fast, especially in residential neighborhoods. Shah starts the conversation with the following: **"Anyone who has driven through densely populated neighborhoods in New Haven would agree with her assessment. However, New Haven is not alone. My daily commute from New Haven to Hartford offers firsthand evidence on the plethora of motor vehicles driving at or above the speed limit in densely populated urban areas, even in the presence of pedestrians lawfully attempting to use crosswalks."**

## UNIONS

[Connecticut Employees Union Independent \(Carl Chisem, President; SEIU Local 511\)](#)

"Between January 1, 2017 and December 3, 2020, there were 4,029 crashes in CT work zones. Of that number there were 17 fatalities and 1,188 injuries. These numbers do not indicate the number of motorists who drive recklessly through work zones without incident." "Motorists are continuing to drive distracted and reckless. They ignore the laws and put people's lives in danger while out on the road. With a reduced police presence throughout the state in maintenance work zones, motorists feel they have free rein to disregard posted speed limits and signage putting the workers' lives and their own lives in jeopardy."

[Connecticut State Employees Association \(Stephen Anderson, President; SEIU Local 2001\)](#)

This testimony references "The reality is that our highways and school zones are not as safe as we would like them to be."

[Service Employees International Union \(Stacey Zimmerman, Associate Director\)](#)

This testimony references "Far too many of our members have been injured or killed while doing their job to keep Connecticut moving. This enforcement measure is not a panacea but a good step in to protecting the lives of those who protect us. We urge adoption by this committee."

[United Auto Workers \(Beverly Brakeman, Regional Director; Region 9A\)](#)

This testimony references "One of the biggest dangers facing motorists today is distracted driving. In the age of technology, this will only continue to get worse. The men and women who work for the Department of Transportation try to ensure that drivers have safe roads and bridges upon which to travel. However, their very lives are not treated with the same concern." "The state of Connecticut needs to follow the lead of other states who have implemented comprehensive work zone safety systems."

[Communications Workers of America \(Noreen Bennett & James Case; Representatives of CWA, Local 1298\)](#)

The testimony explains and notes several important factors regarding how safety workers need further protection. They hugely expressed support for the bill, and are open to working to go even further on protecting workers working within the work zones of Connecticut.

To summarize: **They stated, "Motorists are continuing to drive distracted and reckless. They ignore the laws and put people's lives in danger while out on the road. With a reduced police presence throughout the state in maintenance work zones, motorists feel they have free rein to disregard posted speed limits and signage putting the workers' lives and their own lives in jeopardy."**

## LEGISLATORS

[Representative Jane Garibay \(60<sup>th</sup> Assembly District\)](#)

The testimony represents Representative Jane Garibay of the (60th Assembly District) expresses how much bill would benefit the town of Windsor and Windsor Locks regrading safety and support for the people who live in these areas. It is stated, “Both towns have incredibly busy state routes crossing through their Main Street business districts and have seen numerous pedestrian deaths and injuries in recent years... this bill also helps local businesses that rely on window shoppers to stay afloat.” Garibay goes further and states, “Furthermore, like many towns and cities between Springfield and New Haven, the main state routes located in both towns that I represent also happen to be within short walking distance of train stations along the CTRail Hartford Line. This means that there is an abundance of residents living in transit-oriented housing development close to pedestrian crossing zones and popular local businesses... Whether it be along the Metro-North New Haven Line or the Hartford Line, creating pedestrian-friendly policy will help downtown development in municipalities with transit-oriented business and residential districts.”

## NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

### [Sierra Club \(Samantha Dynowski, State Director\)](#)

This testimony references the Sierra Club supports all the measures within the bill. “Pedestrian deaths have been increasing; despite a sharp decline in traffic, fatalities rose in 2020.” It also references gas emissions regarding cars. It is stated, “Safety measures are also critical to encourage more car-free transportation in order to tackle the climate crisis, and improve air quality.”

### [National Safety Council](#)

This testimony explains “In 2019, 36,096 people died in motor vehicle-related crashes, with 249 lives lost in Connecticut.<sup>1</sup> Preliminary estimates by NSC show there likely will be a significant increase in motor vehicle- related fatalities in 2020 despite less traffic.<sup>2</sup> This data show more needs to be done to improve the safety of our roads for all road users, incorporating education with legislation and targeted enforcement.”

[Center for Latino Progress \(Thomas Lefebvre, Coordinator\)](#)

This testimony references how many individuals within the state rely on other means of transport besides using a car, which shifts the focus to pertaining towards more road safety in the state. The testimony explains the support regarding all the measures of the bill that is set to improve safety for pedestrians and bikers, including pedestrian right-of-way at crosswalks safety upgrades to Connecticut's roads. Working on the authority to set safe local speed limits, that would lead to the use of automated enforcement in work zones and creating a pilot a program, that will allowed municipalities to utilize automated enforcement in school zones. It is stated, "We also live in a state where many cities have very high level of households without cars (Hartford 32%, New Haven 29%, Bridgeport 20%, and Waterbury 20%.)<sup>2</sup> As a result, many Connecticut residents rely on cycling and walking to get to work or to go the grocery store hence being particularly vulnerable to the danger of speeding cars." **"In 2020 alone, at least sixty pedestrians and six cyclists were killed in Connecticut.1 These deaths were preventable. It is very much time indeed to implement policies that will reduce pedestrian and cyclist road injuries and deaths"**

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STATE-WIDE ASSOCIATIONS

["AAA \(contains provisions "to improve traffic safety"\)](#)

:This Testimony explains how they support the bill "that are supplemented with engineering measures, educational campaigns, and traditional law enforcement, provided that thorough evaluations are regularly conducted and disclosed to the public." They also offer several provisions that they are feel are necessary to ensure the programs operate as safely, fairly, and transparently as possible.

[Connecticut Council of Municipalities \(Matthew Knickerbocker: First Selectman, Bethel; Matthew Hoey: First Selectman, Guilford; & M. Randall Collins Jr.: Advocacy Manager, CCM\)](#)

This Testimony references, "Pedestrian accidents are rising at an alarming rate and a recent report by the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) showed pedestrian fatalities increasing nationally by 53% from 2009- 2018 and Connecticut saw a 19% increase from 2018-2019. The study also highlighted that almost 85% of these accidents occurred on local roads other than limited access highways."

[The Connecticut Council of Small Towns \(Betsy Gara, Executive Director\)](#)

This Testimony references strong support for the bill through the provisions sets in place. "COST strongly supports provisions in the bill which would allow local traffic authorities to establish speed limits and pedestrian safety zones. Many towns are struggling to address excessive speeds in downtown areas, which is jeopardizing the safety of pedestrians and other motorists and undermining efforts to encourage people to shop and dine locally

[Connecticut Citizen Action Group \(Angel Serrano, Organizer\)](#)

This Testimony references "In Connecticut, especially in cities, a danger exists. Motorists speed through school zones, through work zones, and when people are standing in crosswalks, putting students, maintenance workers, and pedestrians at risk. Cyclists are also in danger when motorists don't follow the speed limits and when doors are opened impeding their path of travel causing accidents. Drivers are sometimes also distracted by an electronic device which increases the chance of an accident." Furthermore, "In New York City between 2014-2017, 81% of drivers who received a ticket from a speed camera did not receive a second one, and speeding was reduced by over 60 percent." They further stress that pedestrians will be safe with the measures this bill has set in writing.

[The Connecticut American Federation of Labor & Congress of Industrial Organizations \(Sal Luciano, President\)](#)

This Testimony explains “The men and women employed as highway maintainers at the Department of Transportation (DOT) are dedicated public servants. They plow snow, trim trees and make repairs to our state roads so that Connecticut residents can travel safely every day. Too often their jobs are dangerous, even life threatening, because motorists repeatedly fail to consider their safety. With fewer state police on the roads and drivers increasingly distracted by mobile devices, DOT workers literally risk their lives when they enter a work zone.”

[Connecticut Forest & Park Association \(Eric Hammerling, Executive Director\)](#)

This Testimony explains, “We thank the Committee for raising this comprehensive bill with so many important safety provisions. Our testimony is focused on Section 15 of the bill which would establish a greenways commemorative account as a nonlapsing fund and clarify its purpose.”

[Connecticut Main Street Center \(Patrick McMahon, CEO\)](#)

This Testimony explains the advantages that communities will have when it comes to exploring more within the many neighborhoods without being afraid to do so for safety reasons regarding car traffic. “Walkable, bikeable neighborhoods are highly sought after, with 48% of CT’s adults wanting to someday live in an area within walking distance of shops and restaurants, according to a 2014 study from the former Legislative Commission on Aging and the CT Chapter of the American Planning Association. Furthermore, “Pedestrian safety will be enhanced by requiring motorists to grant the right-of-way to pedestrians who affirmatively indicate their intention to cross the road in a crosswalk... The provisions allowing for the establishment of pedestrian safety zones, as well as local traffic authorities to establish lower speed limits on streets under their jurisdiction will also be important steps in making our downtown areas more walkable and bike-friendly.”

[Columbia House \(Margaret Middleton, CEO\)](#)

This Testimony references how many accidents people have witness, with most of them being the drivers fault. “Sadly, many of us have witnessed the tragic consequences of being a pedestrian on this notoriously dangerous stretch of roadway. When we see the police blocking off the street, we get that sick feeling that there has been another tragic “accident.” We have seen the street littered with damaged cars and debris and, unfortunately, too many of us have seen a human being lying in the street – motionless. “

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## REGIONAL & MUNICIPAL

[New Haven Public Schools \(Dr. Ilene Tracey, Superintendent\)](#)

This testimony references automated traffic enforcement in work and school zones is a great thing for the state of Connecticut. Better for safety, and better for residents. “Evidence shows that where automated traffic enforcement is employed that speeding is reduced, and those who do exceed the limit and receive a ticket are unlikely to reoffend. Between 2014 and 2017, when automated enforcement was employed in New York City school zones, speeding was reduced by 60% and 81% of those issued a ticket did not receive a second one.”

[City of New Haven Department of Transportation, Traffic & Parking \(Doug Hausladen, Director\)](#)

This testimony references how the state of Connecticut has taking a lot of steps, precautions to ensure the safety of residents and communities from the dangers that vehicles can present on area roadways and side streets. “We created, disseminated, and promoted our “Street Smarts” education campaign and partnered with local non-profits to host bike safety classes. We worked together to pass the “2015 Bike Bill” which updated the ways in which we can design for non-vehicle road users. And today, we come together and pass an omnibus safety bill with a focus on Vision Zero and a pilot for automated enforcement of speed.”

[The Capitol Region Council of Governments \(Lyle Wray, Executive Director; \*\*pro except for section 6b\*\*\)](#)

This testimony references the number of deaths that have taking place over the last decade within in the state. “ Since 2009, the number of pedestrian deaths nationwide increased by 53 percent, while all other

traffic fatalities increased by only 2 percent. In Connecticut, over the past five years the state has averaged about 58 pedestrian fatalities annually, with preliminary crash data for 2020 showing that this number climbed to 65 last year.”

[East Coast Greenway Alliance \(R Bruce Donald, Tri-State Coordinator\)](#)

This testimony explains, “Allowing municipalities to set the speed limit on municipal roads down to 20mph unilaterally, will streamline a byzantine process that has held up this important safety measure.”

[The Guilford Safe Streets Task Force \(Sam Gerritz, Chair\)](#)

This testimony references how there there approach to pedestrian and cyclist safety is well aligned with that of the state. “We enthusiastically support the clause that will allow local traffic authorities to establish speed limits and pedestrian safety zones, as we feel that this will enhance our ability to implement additional measures to improve pedestrian safety. Finally, the use of traffic cameras is common in many states, and we welcome these initial steps to implement them in CT.”

[The Sasquanaug Association for Southport Improvement \(Jack Ijams, President\)](#)

“Those of us who regularly walk, cycle or drive past this area know that it is dangerous and want to make sure all are safe. The safety measures proposed in HB5429 include many solutions that we are proposing in Fairfield: decreased speed limits and crosswalk rules with fines for motorists who do not comply. Other measures will greatly serve the safety of all vulnerable road uses as well as drivers of cars.”

[The Stratfield Village Association \(All Board Members\)](#)

This testimony explains how this bill will not just help out students, but by providing them with more safety, but also encouraging more street smarts on our roadways as well. “One of the biggest concerns among residents in our neighborhood is speeding. The Stratfield area includes many small neighborhoods with previously quiet streets that have become cut throughs because of the ubiquitous use of in-car GPS systems. This has caused some streets to become very dangerous for pedestrians, bikers, and even kids playing in their front yards.”

**BIKE & PEDESTRIAN SAFETY ORGANIZATIONS**

[People Friendly Stamford](#)

This testimony references, “Millions are affected either directly and indirectly by the carnage on our roads, which are a completely expected consequence of the fact that we have designed our streets, automobiles, and associated infrastructure to privilege motor vehicle speed and driver convenience over everything else: walkability, bike-ability, safety, economic sustainability, urban vibrancy, mitigating air pollution/noise pollution/carbon emissions.” It discusses that people everyday are affected by some form of accident on the road, and why it needs to be solved now with a solution to help the public.

[Bike Cheshire \(Jim Jinks, Executive Director\)](#)

This testimony explains, “Traffic and speeding is a common complaint from residents in our cities and suburban towns. This is largely a problem by design. Meaning our streets are designed with only one user in mind – drivers. If we design our streets with all users in mind (drivers, pedestrians and cyclists), the safer everyone will be and the more efficient our streets will be for all users.” In addition, “Now more than ever we need a stronger sense of community and togetherness in our cities and towns. Streets that encourage more walking and bicycling, also strengthen the social and civic fabric of our neighborhoods and municipalities. In short, places designed for people, rather than cars, will be places that people gather, socialize, collaborate and form bonds with each other and with their community.”

[Bike Walk Wethersfield \(Kevin T. Sullivan, Co-Founder\)](#)

This testimony explains why having this bill put into law should happen for the safety of children and local residents. It states, “School zone safety is very important to me. My son was hit by a car while riding his bicycle in a school zone. The driver rolled through a stop sign because she could not see past parents in parked cars waiting to pick up their children. My son escaped serious injury but does have recurring back pain 15 years later.”

[Connecticut Bike & Pedestrian Advisory Board \(Sandy Fry, Chair\)](#)

This testimony references, “Current statute requires that motor vehicles yield to pedestrians who are in a crosswalk, the proposed legislation will modify this language to require that motorists yield to pedestrians who are at a crosswalk and indicating their intention to use the crosswalk. This is an important change, as it does not require the pedestrian to step into the roadway while traffic is moving, in order to establish that the pedestrian wishes to cross.”

[Norwalk Pedestrian Committee \(Audrey Cozzarin & Barbara Meyer-Mitchel, Co-Chairs\)](#)

This testimony explains that, “By utilizing automated ticketing in school and work zones, we can protect our citizens more comprehensively without incurring increased labor costs of police enforcement to our city’s operating budget and future pension liability. We hope that better enforcement with more painful fines would deter speeding and distracted driving.” Further states, “We have noted the need for uninterrupted sidewalks, crosswalks and traffic control measures on the state routes in our municipality, which are beyond the capacity of the city to meet with our current revenues. Norwalk serves as a big box shopping hub for many surrounding communities, and the sales taxes revenues from these retail centers contribute significantly to the state revenue streams.”

[Southport's Pequot Avenue Pedestrian & Bike Safety Task Force \(Judith Proctor, Co- Chair\)](#)

This testimony explains the significant of why traffic violence is a serious threat to society, and why by having this bill be focus on dedicated to making life much safer, easy, and accessible to walk and bike, is a advantage for us all. Better for the environment. Not a disadvantage. “Two pedestrians have been hit by cars and died in Fairfield (Southport is part of Fairfield) in 2020 with many more pedestrians/bikers hit and injured. Those of us who regularly walk, bike or drive to this area know that it is dangerous and want to make sure all are safe.”

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

[ACLU \(Kelly McConney Moore, Interim Senior Policy Counsel\)](#)

This testimony expresses much opposition to the planning and execution of this bill for various reasons, provided by the testimony above. With much of the argument being focused on privacy concerns, as well as Due Process concerns. One concern was written in this statement, “ One of the largest providers of license plate reader databases in the country contracted with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to give it access to the information it collects, which jeopardizes the safety and wellbeing of immigrants throughout the country.”

[State of Connecticut Judicial Branch \(Operational Conerns with 5\[f\], 22\[c\], 23, 24\[a\], 25 and 26\)](#)

“These provisions would be difficult to implement. Currently, the manner in which a violation is detected is not captured. Therefore, in order to implement these provisions, a change in how violations are recorded at the time of issuance would be necessary. Additionally, programmatic changes to the Branch’s automated systems would be necessary, which may necessitate time and expense.”

[Connecticut State Police Union \(Andrew N. Matthews, Executive Director; Section 16\)](#)

This testimony explains, “While we are committed to working with the proponents of this Bill to find a solution to there concerns, we do not support the use of unreliable speed enforcement cameras.”

[Western Connecticut Council of Governments \(Pertaining to the Adjustment of Speed Limits\)](#)

This testimony references, “While speed limits in some places may benefit from revisitation, any proposal that increases inconsistency in the system risks violating public expectations of a uniform experience, potentially creating safety concerns, impeding the efficient flow of people and goods, and displacing traffic to other locations.”

**Reported by: Philip Mainiero**

**Date: 4/12/21**