



CONNECTICUT STATE POLICE UNION

Good morning, Senator Cassano, Representative Lemar and Distinguished Members of the Transportation Committee.

My name is Andrew Matthews, and I am the Executive Director of the Connecticut State Police Union and a retired Sergeant within the Connecticut State Police. The State Police Union represents approximately 897 State Troopers, Sergeants and Master Sergeants. The Connecticut State Police Union membership takes great pride in protecting all Connecticut citizens and visitors, the men and women working in construction zones, including our Brothers and Sisters within the Department of Transportation.

We appreciate the opportunity to speak before you today. I am here to speak in **OPPOSITION** of:

RAISED BILL NO. 5429 (Section 16)

AN ACT CONCERNING MAINTENANCE WORK ZONE SAFETY ENFORCEMENT

As work zone construction increases on our roadways, there is a significant rise in distracted drivers on our roadways, with motorists talking on their cell phones, texting, reading, surfing the internet and most importantly drunk driving. Together, we have an obligation to prevent injuries and deaths of pedestrians, motorists, and roadway workers, but we must also fulfill our oath of office by protecting the constitutional rights of all citizens. ***While we are committed to working with the proponents of this Bill to find a solution to their concerns, we do not support the use of unreliable speed enforcement cameras.***

All Connecticut law enforcement officers take pride in the protection and preservation of life and property and take an oath to uphold both the Connecticut and United States constitution. When enforcing the law, we understand that discretion, compassion and respect for others is necessary to best serve the public as a peace officer. ***We have an obligation to ensure and know the United States constitution requires that all citizens are innocent until proven guilty.*** It is also our responsibility to speak out when we believe these basic constitutional rights are at risk of being eroded.

Connecticut General Statute 29-7, states, in part, "The Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection shall devise and make effective a system of police patrols throughout the state, exclusive of cities and boroughs, ***for the purpose of preventing or detecting any violation of the criminal law or any law relating to motor vehicles...***" Connecticut law does not allow for a delegation of police powers with respect to the detection of speeding motor vehicles on our roadways and does not allow for a camera to substitute the training, experience and knowledge of a sworn police officer. More importantly, it is a police officer's responsibility to calibrate speed enforcement equipment, personally witness a motor vehicle violation, investigate any reason(s) for an alleged violation, verify the identification of a motor vehicle operator, and use discretion to determine whether enforcement action is necessary. Unfortunately, a speed enforcement camera is not capable of making these decisions and should not be relied upon or considered as evidence that a violation of law has occurred on our roadways.

This Bill proposes to use speed enforcement cameras to replace State Troopers on our Limited Access Highways. It expressly states, "An automated traffic enforcement safety device shall be installed in a manner to ***only record images of the number plate of the motor vehicle***, and shall not record images of the occupants of such motor vehicle..." and "...the Division of State Police ***shall, not later than ten days after the alleged violation, mail the citation to the registered owner of the motor vehicle...***" This language is a violation of an individual's 6th Amendment rights, which grants an accused the right to be confronted with the witnesses against them and the right to cross examine their accuser. Also, if the speed camera only captures an image of the vehicle license plate, how would the identity of the operator be verified? How would an operator confront or ask questions to a mechanical device? State Troopers, not speed cameras, should be used to protect other motorists and our work zone employees.

**Connecticut
State Police Union**

The Legislature can send a strong message to motorists that there will be zero tolerance for the reckless operation of motor vehicles within work zones here in Connecticut, but not by using speed enforcement cameras. *When a speeding motorist travels through a work zone, a speed camera cannot initiate a motor vehicle stop to eliminate a dangerous and reckless operator from our roadways.* Furthermore, not only is the use of cameras inherently unfair to the motoring public, but it also improperly delegates the statutory authority of law enforcement officers to a privately owned-for-profit corporation and subcontracts the work of law enforcement. Accordingly, privatizing law enforcement responsibilities could lead to fraud, abuse, and litigation for violations of an individual's constitutional rights.

Based on the foregoing, we respectfully request this Committee not approve Section 16 of this proposed legislation.

January 27, 2021

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