

*Tristan's Law*, proposed SB Bill No. 608, An Act Concerning The Safety of Children When Buying Ice Cream From a Frozen Dessert Truck.

Dear members of the Transportation Committee:

My name is William Griffin, and I am the owner of Leadership Martial Arts in Plantsville. I had the pleasure of instructing Tristan Barhorst for several years before his life was taken all too soon.

I am writing to request that you support proposed Bill No 608, an act establishing safety protocols concerning the use and operation of ice cream trucks and frozen dessert vending trucks. As an advocate for teaching safety to children in the forms of bully defense, stranger danger, and success through life skills, I fully believe in the benefit this bill will have.

On June 12, 2020, Tristan D. Barhorst's life suddenly came to an end when he was truck and killed by a vehicle that went around a stopped ice cream truck after Tristan had purchaed ice cream from the truck. Tristan, almost 11 years old and a group of children crosseed Weise Road in Cheshire to purchase ice cream from a truck that stopped across the street from them-even though there were no children or customers on the other side of the road. After Tristan purchaed his ice cream he attempted to recross the street when a teenager driver passed around the ice cream truck from behind and struck Tristan.

The proposed legislation would require ice cream trucks and frozen dessert vending trucks to have the necessary equipment to put motor vehicle drivers on notice that children may be present and hopefully influence the drivers' behavior. Such equipment includes, flashing signal lamps, signal arms and caution signs, front convex mirrors, and rear visibility equipment to increase the driver's line of site. The legislation would also require ice cream truck operators to activate their signs at each stop and require vehicles to stop while the sign is extended. It should be noted that the language in the bill specifies that this is not a continuous and prolonged stop, but rather a stop and proceed so as not to cause any traffic interferences but alert drivers to the pedestrian presence for everyone's safety. The ice cream truck involved in this incident had such equipment attached to the vehicle, but the operator chose not to activate the sign. This law would require the sign and signals to be always activated when the ice cream truck is vending and thus reduce the risk of another child and family to endure such a tragic loss.

Many other states already have state-wide legislation in place that address this issue. Connecticut does not.

Of note, the City of Hartford has an ordinance that prohibits ice cream truck vendors from vending to children that must cross the street in order to access the truck and to purchase their ice cream. I would encourage this provision to be added to the currently proposed legislation. There is no downside to this addition.

I kindly request that you support and further identify this bill as "*Tristan's Law*" in honor of this amazing young man's life. Thank you for your time, energy, and consideration in raising this bill.

Very truly yours,

William Griffin