



STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

**2800 BERLIN TURNPIKE, P.O. BOX 317546
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06131-7546**

Public Hearing- February 26, 2024
Transportation Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Garrett T. Eucalitto
Connecticut Department of Transportation

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) respectfully offers the following comments on ***House Bill 5204, An Act Concerning the Registration and Use of Low-Speed Vehicles***. This bill permits the registration of low-speed vehicles (LSVs) and the operation of such vehicles on highways with posted speed limits of 35 mph or less.

The safety of all roadway users is CTDOT's top priority. Allowing LSVs, which have a maximum speed of 25 mph, to share a street or highway with other vehicles where the posted speed limit is 35 mph presents a significant risk. Studies show that speed differences between vehicles results in more motor vehicle crashes. Aggressive drivers in vehicles travelling behind slower moving LSVs may be encouraged to pass and overtake LSVs in areas that are not safe to pass, creating a safety concern.

The bill also requires that LSVs meet federal safety standards and equipment requirements. While this is important, this requirement may be misleading. Federal safety standards do require LSVs to have headlights, turn signals, and a windshield, but there are minimal safety measures for vehicle occupants when compared to other motor vehicles we see on our roadways today. LSVs are not equipped with features to protect occupants during a crash; they have very little frontal impact protection and even less side impact protection for the driver and passengers. There have been numerous high-profile cases of serious crashes involving LSVs and cars or trucks.

Additionally, the potential for crashes between this new class of vehicles and traditional cars and trucks presents an opportunity for a catastrophic incident due to the differences in size, weight, and vehicle manufacturing specifications.

If the committee decides to move forward with the proposal, the following changes are recommended to limit safety concerns:

- Limit LSVs to streets and highways with a posted speed limit of 25 mph or less.

- Require the Office of the State Traffic Administration to approve the use of LSVs on any state highway.

For further information or questions, please contact Anne Kleza (anne.kleza@ct.gov) at the Connecticut Department of Transportation at (860) 594-3013.