



CITY OF NEW HAVEN

JUSTIN ELICKER, MAYOR

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Testimony in Support of S.B. 1284, An Act Concerning the Illegal Use of Certain Vehicles and Street Takeovers

Friday, March 7th, 2025
Judiciary Committee Public Hearing

Dear Co-Chairs Senator Winfield and Representative Stafstrom, Vice Chairs Flexer, Gadkar-Wilcox, and Fazzino, Ranking Members Kissel and Fishbein, and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Justin Elicker, and I am the Mayor of the City of New Haven.

I am testifying today in strong support of S.B. 1284, An Act Concerning the Illegal Use of Certain Vehicles and Street Takeovers, and to express the need for a continued strong statewide commitment to provide municipalities across Connecticut with the tools needed to combat these persistent challenges. We are thankful for the measures that the Legislature has passed over the past few years, and we are hopeful that S.B. 1284 will give us additional tools to help us continue to keep our communities safe.

Street takeovers and the use of illegal dirt bikes and ATVs are extremely dangerous, posing a risk not only to the participants themselves, but also to bystanders, neighbors, and our public safety personnel. We have seen injuries across the state and other dangerous activity associated with street takeovers, such as fires being set, fireworks being thrown, and in some cases, shots being fired.

New Haven has done what we can to combat street takeovers and illegal ATV and dirt bike riding – enacting local ordinances that increase fines and seize vehicles; fining gas stations that service these vehicles; establishing a Joint Regional Task Force on Dirt Bikes and ATVs with our neighboring towns; and deploying technology and infrastructure measures such as cameras, drones, and speed humps to prevent street takeovers. But we've identified more tools that would be helpful to address the issue.

We are supportive of the bill measures that allow municipalities to establish by ordinances fines for participating in, organizing or spectating a street takeover, impounding authority if fines are not paid, and license suspension consequences. We are also supportive of the changes to allow

municipalities to destroy seized ATVs and dirt bikes, while also giving lienholders 30 days notice to retrieve vehicles before they are forfeited to the municipality. Currently, while municipalities can seize ATVs and dirt bikes used in these street takeovers, they must be sold at public auction, which means these vehicles go back on the street, or that they need to be stored indefinitely, both draining municipal resources. This bill would allow municipalities the ability to destroy these vehicles, taking them off the street, while also serving as an effective deterrent.

One suggested addition would be to extend the license suspension penalties for street takeovers (45 days for the first and second violations, permanent revocation for the third violation) proposed in SB 1284 to also cover illegal ATV and dirt biking riding as well. The current state statute does not have such a penalty and we believe this will be a helpful additional tool to deter individuals from riding these vehicles illegally on Connecticut Streets.

Street takeovers and illegal ATV and dirt bike riding are incredibly difficult to combat once they have begun, with participants widely outnumbering our police capacity, and so deterrence is even more important.

I am proud to be Mayor of a city that is striving to do what we can to address the needs and safety concerns of our residents. SB 1284 would provide much-needed tools for municipalities to address these dangerous and persistent activities in our communities.

Thank you for your time & consideration and I strongly encourage your support.

Sincerely,



Justin Elicker
Mayor, City of New Haven