February 28, 2014

Sen. Andrew Maynard and Rep. Antonio Guerrera, Co-Chairs
Connecticut General Assembly Transportation Committee
Room 2300
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: SB 336

Dear Sen. Maynard and Rep. Guerrera,

I write to you as a supporter of Senate Bill 336, “An Act Concerning the Penalty for Causing harm to a Vulnerable User of a Public Way” and to call your attention to a key difference between the bill as proposed and as drafted by the committee. As originally proposed, SB336:

- Defines a “vulnerable user” of the state’s roads as a pedestrian, highway worker, person riding or driving an animal, person riding a bicycle, person using a skateboard, roller skates or inline skates, person operating or riding on an agricultural tractor or person using a wheelchair or motorized chair; and

- Provides that a person who fails to exercise reasonable care while driving, and injures or kills a vulnerable user, shall be required to attend a driver’s retraining program and to perform community service, and may be fined up to $1,000.

As a pediatric emergency department physician, I cannot stress enough the multi-faceted burdens associated with traumatic injury of innocent pedestrians and cyclists. We often care for these vulnerable victims who have lost their life, limb, and/or have become permanently disabled from reckless motor vehicle drivers. These injuries add to preventable health care dollars wasted. The emotional impact cannot be understated and post-traumatic stress experienced by family members can last a lifetime. This bill is a step in the right direction to change motorist behaviors and will add much needed additional protections to our street’s vulnerable users as described above.

Sincerely,

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CC: Senator Beth Bye
Representative Roland Lemar
Members of the Joint Transportation Committee