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Representative Roland Lemar

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Kissel, Lopes, Martin,  
Needleman, Osten, Somers

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O'Dea, Rebimbas, Reyes,  
Rosario, Simms, Smith,  
Steinberg, Thomas,  
Zawistowski, Zupkus

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you. And thank you, everyone for joining us on the first official Public Hearing of the 2021 Connecticut General Assembly. The Transportation Committee has had three informational hearings to date with our DMV, DoT, and Connecticut Airport Authority. This is the first time that we are seeing proposed Bills before us. As anyone who's tuned in to these Committee hearings knows there is a new process for us. There may be some technological slips along the way, but we will rectify them as we go. And we will ensure that everyone who's interested in testifying has an opportunity to do so.

The first hour of our Public Hearing is reserved for Public Officials. I know we have the Mayor of New Haven online first, followed by the Commissioner, Department of Motor Vehicles coming on quickly thereafter, we will then move to the public for a period of time and then we'll go back and forth and to the Public Officials and members of the public.

This is a challenging process as questions and answers arise from Committee Members, I will

recognize you by you raising your hand or otherwise alerting me that you have a question. We will stay out of the chat please do not utilize the chat for any functions today because as a matter of public record it's very difficult for members of the public to access the chat and it's very hard for our clerk to transcribe emojis into a public record that's reliable. So if you have any questions, identify yourself to myself, Representatives Carney, Senator Cassano or Senator Somers, if I'm not calling on you directly.

Folks can remain on mute, for the duration of the Public Hearing unless they have a question, and I have called on them that would help move things along quite deliberately. With that, are there any comments from any of -- Senator Cassano or Ranking Members Carney or Somers? Seeing none, we will start off with our Public Hearing and first on today's agenda is Mayor Justin Elicker from the city of New Haven. Welcome Mayor.

MAYOR JUSTIN ELICKER: Thanks so much for having me. Representative Lemar and Senator Cassano and members of the committee. I appreciate your being flexible in this incredible time that we're in. First I'd like to mention that I'm joined today in submitting testimony not only by many members of the New Haven community, it sounds like there's a lot of people that had signed up but also from the -- by the City of New Haven's Director Traffic, Transportation and Parking, Doug Hausladen, Iline Tracey, Superintendent of Schools Eileen Tracy, and Chief of Police, Otoniel Reyes.

And I think that underscores just how important this issue is to us. I'm here to provide testimony and strong support of House Bill 5429. The legislation is a very important step in ensuring greater pedestrian and traffic safety for the residents of New Haven and around the state.

New Haven has seen a significant number of pedestrian and bicycle deaths in recent years related to speeding and dangerous driving. And just to give an example, in 2020 alone, the city lost 11 residents in pedestrian and bicycle related crashes. Too often traffic incidents and pedestrian deaths go unnoticed in particular when they play -- take place in communities of color. A report from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration of the US Department of Transportation found that fatalities of pedestrians and other people not in vehicles as percentage of all motor vehicle traffic fatalities were highest primarily for African-American children in the four to 15 year old range.

House Bill 5429 has several provisions that will dramatically improve the public safety of New Haven and municipalities across our state by empowering us with the authority to take action and giving us the tools to do so effectively and equitably. I want to highlight a couple of important components of this. First, it empowers our local Traffic Authority to comprehensively review the speed limits on municipally-owned roads and evaluate whether a lowered speed limit can have a positive impact in reducing traffic incidents.

New Haven, as many of you know, is becoming an increasingly multi-modal city. And as we transition from a car-centric mode of transportation to one where a range of options are available to residents, the legislation takes a number of steps in facilitating that transition, and does so in a responsible and measured way. Perhaps most importantly, House Bill 5429 is a major step in giving our city the tools it needs to enforce the law.

Automated traffic enforcement within school and work zones is both an effective and common sense way. It's already used in over 450 communities and in 22 states to increase traffic safety. You will undoubtedly hear today from advocates throughout the

state, but particularly from the New Haven community about how automated traffic enforcement provides a range of benefits, with evidence clearly demonstrating reduced incidents of speeding, as well as lower fatalities overall. There have of course been concerns throughout the conversation of automated traffic enforcement about equity.

The concerns are based on a long history of disparate treatment, we need to earn the trust of communities of color, who have too often been victims of bias traffic enforcement in our state and country. But I believe this Bill is essential in doing just that, particularly by ensuring the technology utilizes only licensed plate information to identify the vehicle, not the driver. In these incidences, racial bias is, as it should be at every level of the criminal justice system effectively removed from the equation. Passage of this Bill will save lives and do so responsibly. The number of people from New Haven to testifying today underscore the urgency and importance of this issue. I appreciate your consideration of this Bill and urge you to vote in favor of it. Thank you so much.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Mayor Elicker, for your testimony and for your commitment on this issue. For benefit of the Committee before you were Mayor of New Haven, you were a member of the Board of Alders, Safe Streets advocate in our city for a long period of time, and was one of the leaders in helping the city think through better planning and operations on our city roadways, and how you lead on these issues in the past.

And it's not just what we've seen over the last year or two that's driven your interest in this issue but a lifelong commitment to it. So I thank you for your testimony today. And as you alluded to, this is an issue that we've seen firsthand in New Haven, the degree to which is something we otherwise would have thought unimaginable, the number of fatalities and crashes involving pedestrians has only risen in

our city over a number of years besides investments that we've made in complete street implementation and infrastructure, despite the educational campaigns that we've undertaken, despite the myriad efforts that we've put in to everything else over the last few years, we're continuing to see extraordinary high rates of speed levels, of distracted driving, and the fact that people are driving heavier and larger vehicles are contributing to dramatic increase in severity and mortality of these crashes.

Not just a New Haven story. It's happening across the state of Connecticut. We've seen record numbers of fatalities and mortality of those crashes increasing. It's not just Connecticut either. It's across the country as a whole. So I appreciate your leadership on this issue and coming forward today.

MAYOR JUSTIN ELICKER: Thank you Representative Lemar.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): If members of the Committee have questions or points of clarification of Mayor Elicker, if you could identify by raising your hand or letting myself or Representative Carney or Senator Somers or Cassano know, that would be great. Seeing none, Thank you, Mayor Elicker for your time today and for being our first person to take part in our Public Hearing process. Next up, we have our Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles. Commissioner, are you online? Mr. Clerk, we have representatives from the Department of--

PHILIP MAINIERO: Yes, the DMV is being led into the hearing room now. Unfortunately, we have three different identifiers for the Deputy Commissioner, it may take a moment to get him in.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Okay. I believe we should have Deputy Commissioner Guerrera and the legislative leaders on in this hearing room if they could unmute

themselves, and just confirm the other members of DoT that will be testifying with them.

COMM. MAGUBANE: We're on Can you hear us?

REP. LEMAR (96TH): We can Commissioner, good to see you all if you could each individually identify yourself. And before anyone speaks, if they can identify themselves by name and title, that would be terrific. Thank you.

COMM. MAGUBANE: Commissioner Sibongile Magubane

TONY GUERRERA: Good afternoon everyone. Deputy Commissioner, Tony Guerrero.

MICHELE STRAPPS: Good morning, Michele Strapps Chief Finance Officer.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Great to see everyone this morning. Everyone introduces themselves before they speak. If there are any questions or answers it would be helpful if you could identify yourself before you provide an answer to the Committee Member. With that the floor is yours Commissioner.

COMM. MAGUBANE: Good afternoon, Chairman Cassano and Lamar, Ranking Members Somers and Carney and distinguished members of the Transportation Committee. Thank you so much for the opportunity to present testimony in support of Senate Bill 261, an Act concerning the recommendations by the Department of Motor Vehicles. The components of our Bill covers three areas of focus. One is to ensure that the agency complies with all federal laws.

Another key point within our Bill is to ensure that as we continue to deliver services through our processes, as constituents, we are looking at our processes and streamlining. It also speaks to the agency's desire to deploy new processes and technology to deliver critical services to all

constituents in a safe and convenient manner.  
Demand for DMV services continue to increase.

To meet the demand, the agency will use technology to expand our capacity, and will also focus our staff in delivering quality -- superior quality service. Customers have been very happy with the technologies that we have introduced as -- while we were under COVID, including the appointment system. But as you can -- as you know that the appointment system actually constricts our capacity. So our view is, we need to use technology to continue to meet the demand so that we can address not only all of the pent-up demand that came about during COVID, where we have the extension, but also new customers as they -- or constituents as they move to Connecticut.

My testimony provides a breakdown of the proposals that we submitted in 2020, as well as new proposals that were --that we submitted to address COVID as well as new 2021 proposals. But the approach that we're going to take is that there are quite a few items on our agenda is to really highlight what we think are critical proposals within inspection. Once I highlighted those, I'm assuming that everyone has a list of what we submitted, I will give you the opportunity to ask questions related to other items within those sections.

So the summary -- the summary of our previously submitted proposals, one of the key ones that we think is important to this body is that we are actually correcting the language for saving or lakes plate. And we want to make sure that the language enables us to appropriately allocate fees. I think Millie has talked about this. We also want to make sure that you can allow DMV to issue a one year student transportation vehicle combination registration. Currently, the statute pro-rates the fees in accordance with the passenger registration. But STVs are mixed use. And the current practice is

to issue them as a combination vehicle. So we're correcting that.

We're also including language to apply to federal law for minimum insurance for commercial passenger-carrying vehicles. We found that it's been 40 years since the insurance limits were updated. And so this language actually corrects those minimums. We're actually also added language that enables the DMV to leverage technology. For example, for online renewals, because in order for us to continue to move the pent-up demand and new demand. Technology's going to be a key way for us to do that. So that language is included in our Bill. I'll stop right there and see if the Deputy Commissioner has anything to add to the use of technology, because I know this is a very important topic for everyone.

TONY GUERRERA: Thank you, Commissioner. This is Deputy Commissioner Tony Guerrero. As the Commission mentioned, obviously going to the appointment system, ladies and gentlemen, they're obviously, you know, once -- about a year ago, the lines were out the door. And now we're in an appointment system, that capacity obviously will not generate as many people. Therefore as she stated, modernizing technology will help us get to that point where we can accommodate all this.

COMM. MAGUBANE: And so one section, section 13 and the 14-41 (b). This one has somewhat been misinterpreted in many ways, but we want to make sure that everybody understands that the agency is looking to remove a requirement to get talks about delivering certain services to the office or facility to enable the agency to be able to evaluate options to deploy mobile units, portable licensing technology that is available, and actually kiosks that can be placed in different places. So this one is one of the key words again, keep hearing me talking about capacity.

We currently have maybe four months' worth of backlog and we've closed for COVID. And the -- the option for -- for conducting services was through visiting the DMV, we're now looking ahead to be able to continue to address and provide customers with many channels to be able to transact their business. So I will stop there to see if there any questions, because think I see a hand.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Yes. Thank you, Commissioner, Senator Austin.

SENATOR OLSTEN (19TH): Thank you very much. Mr. Chair, Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner, first, I want to thank you, you stayed open, you reopened in the middle of COVID. And it seems to have been very successful. Have you had any problems relative to staying open during COVID?

COMM. MAGUBANE: I think we had an incident in one of our branch offices and so what we monitor the level of -- of our staff that tests positive so we did close. I believe it was the Bridgeport -- the Bridgeport branch for two days for cleaning, once we had some staff test positive, but otherwise, we've continued to deliver services throughout the pandemic.

TONY GUERRERA: Senator Olsten, good afternoon. Nice to see you. This is Deputy Commissioner Tony Guerrera. Like the Commissioner stated, I think when we opened during the pandemic, we made it pretty clear that we want to make sure that the safety of our employees and the safety of our customers were most foremost that is why we were one of the first ones to get the Plexiglas or electrostatic clean while all the branches on a weekly basis, high point areas cleaning, daily routine and we have a cleaning service that goes through the building every single night along with the electrostatic ones that are affordable for every branch location.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH): Thank you and sticking to the two questions. component first -- you know, first I just have to applaud you on the -- on the way that you have taken care of individual needs because I know my office often calls for Department of Motor Vehicle issues and they get answered right away, we're able to give our -- the those constituents that call in a fairly comprehensive answer early on. Are you in -- in regards to getting more modernized, do you believe that that will provide a cost-saving component of your processes?

COMM. MAGUBANE: In theory, yes, in fact, we've been in discussions and are starting to really look at what the potential provides. What I tend to -- what I believe is, although we -- you know, technology will provide an opportunity to automate certain processes, a critical part of what the DMV does is really the customer service, face-to-face that we provide, you just spoke about the phone calls that come in where many people just need help.

And I don't believe that technology can fulfill that need. And especially as I have personally observed and actually tried to get online, for example, to register a vaccine, it can be very frustrating. So really, our approach is to think about this as efficiencies, ensuring that as our demand increases, capacity stays in line with the demand. And so we are looking at what can we do, but at the end of the day, I'm cautious in -- you know, kind of determining what that means. Because really the nature of the work also will change in terms of what our internal employees will do in the future.

SENATOR OSTEN (19TH): I look forward to greater conversations. I want to stick to the two question minimum in order to keep this moving along. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you Senator Osten.  
Ranking Member Somers.

SENATOR SOMERS (18TH): Yes, thank you for your presentation. And I had a couple questions. First, I want to make one comment that I want to give a shout out to the DMV because it was -- not during COVID. But before COVID, you all, were able to identify one of my constituents who was overcharged his taxes on his boat trailer and his boat, because we have lowered the boat tax, and you identified that and he was able to go back and get a refund on the taxes that he deserved. So thank you for that. That was really great when he -- he was noticed when he went to register his -- his boat trailer. So thank you for that.

But secondly, two questions on I think I have my notes here. I'm sorry, I'm jumping between a few Zooms, it's section 23 of the Bill, and it's right, obviously right behind section 22. I was wondering if -- if 22 and 23 are necessary? Has there been actually complaints on deposits being kept by auto dealers? Do we actually have complaints from consumers? And if so, how many are we getting? Or how many do we have on that? And then my second question, I will tell you quickly is just on your license renewal idea. Are those compliant with federal guidelines?

COMM. MAGUBANE: Yes, the second one is yes. But I'll let Sharon, our Legal Director answer your first question.

SHARON GEANURACOS: Good afternoon. My name is Sharon Geanuracos. I'm the Agency Legal Director for the Department of Motor Vehicles. And the answer to your question is yes, we have had complaints, and you know, we have a consumer complaint center here. So we keep track of what types of complaints we get about dealers and this has arisen a number of times. You know. Mostly with smaller car dealers but we try not to put anything into statute unless we see a pattern and so yeah, that is the case.

SENATOR SOMERS (18TH): So you have had complaints on dealers keeping the deposit and how many complaints have you gotten? Do you know off the top of your head?

SHARON GEANURACOS: Not right now but I'll get that numbers for you.

SENATOR SOMERS (18TH): Okay, thank you. I appreciate that. Those are my two questions. Thank you.

COMM. MAGUBANE: Gail, you want to say something?

GAIL: Just a real quick. I'm Gail [inaudible], Chief Operating Officer. We've had specifically probably since we've done added casual sales in some of the other dealer work that we've added through COVID we have dealers that are actually charging sometimes up to \$250 for someone to come in, we have -- and so that's why we wanted to make sure, and that's why this is important. It is because it's not so much that we've had a high volume. It's just there are periodic dealers in certain areas that are taking advantage of citizens and we want to ensure fairness.

SENATOR SOMERS (18TH): So they're charging that just -- I just want to be clear, it's not that somebody's put deposit on a car and not being able to get it back, it's more that they are required deposit to go into the auto dealer to look at a car?

GAIL: They are asking for a deposit to do the registration when they get the car. And when they -- when they go in and then do a variety of services related to us with the car. And we just saw -- this a variety of pieces that we're just trying to update so that we ensure that the citizens are consistent with how they're being treated.

SENATOR SOMERS (18TH): Okay, if you could just give me the number that would be really helpful. Thank you.

COMM. MAGUBANE: Thank you. Any other questions?

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Yes. Representatives Zupkus.

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH): Hi, thank you. I am new to this Committee. It's my first time to sit on it. So I'm grateful to be here. I appreciate it. But I do have a couple of questions. I had, as a matter of fact, two constituents that called me in the last couple of days, and one -- it was both in regards to the same thing as far as voter registration, at the DMV, and at AAA.

And so I guess my question is -- is that law -- is that state statute that DMV is supposed to ask for that? Number one, and number two, when they the one person that went to DMV, she was asked, you know, do you want to register to vote? Are you registered? And she said she was and she had to sign a piece of paper. They, -- the lady who was helping her, the DMV employee said, you know, we have to have this paper signed to prove that we asked the question. However, the person at AAA went through the same process, but then was asked, do you want to change your voter registration? So I, -- because I've never sat on this Committee. I'm not familiar with these processes. And I'm just curious if you could answer those for me, please.

COMM. MUGABANE: Yes, our Legal Director, Sharon Geanuracos can do that.

SHARON GEANURACOS: Yes. So voter registration, or what's known as motor voter is required -- is done at DMV under both state and federal law. So we're required to ask those questions. The difference -- most people don't have to sign a piece of paper, we have customer facing devices, and they actually answer the questions themselves.

And they do an electronic signature at the end. Sometimes, if that device isn't working, they're -- they go through a partially manual process and that's where a person is asked to sign a piece of paper, to show that they -- they acknowledge which choice they made. So if they choose, if they say I'm already registered to vote and signed, and if someone you know, comes back later, and says that's not what I did, we can go back and look at the record. So I think that's probably what the difference is in the questions. Dose that answer everything you asked?

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH): Well, almost so when someone goes in -- so if I went in to update my driver's license, or whatever, and they put in my information, does it come up on the screen that I am a registered voter? And what party unregistered to? What does the information show?

SHARON GEANURACOS: If you do electronically it will direct you to the Secretary of State's office to determine whether you're a registered voter. So it says something like you see, you're already registered to vote, if you want to update your voter status, your registration status, name, or party. And you can check, No, but we don't see what your party is. The party is not visible on the screen.

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH): Okay, thank you. You can just see if I'm registered or not,

SHARON GEANURACOS: Right? We know you're registered, but we don't know what party you're you registered in. But we do give you the opportunity to change that if you if you check. No, I'm already registered. We ask you if you want to change anything. And then if you say no, you just move on to the next set of questions related to your license.

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH): Okay, thank you. It's just odd that I had my first meeting today and I had two of these calls over the last couple of days. Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you. Representative Carney.

REP. CARNEY (23RD): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, everyone for -- for coming to testify today. My only question is regarding -- I think it's Section 8. And I know since we spoke -- this was this was sort of one of the more confusing provisions of the legislation even when we initially spoke about it. But reviewing through the Public Hearing testimony, the taxicab companies are extremely concerned about increasing the insurance limits on taxi cabs. You know, there's some concern, especially given the parameters -- the issues regarding COVID, the competition with TNCs, that this is going to put, you know, the final stake in the coffin for a traditional taxi cab companies. So I mean, I'm a little concerned about that. So is there a reason you chose these numbers? And the second part of it is, will you be willing to sit down with the traditional taxicab companies to try to come up with a more favorable on number for those insurance limits?

COMM. MAGUBANE: I turn that to our Legal Director to provide the answers.

SHARON GEANURACOS: So there's -- there's two parts to this change. And one is for vehicles that carry between seven passengers and 12 passengers, not for compensation and 13, 14 passenger not for compensation. But just initially, some of the -- some of the statute conflict with federal law.

And it also conflicts with state law. And that is for vehicles that are designed or used to transport 8 passengers on what application they fall under federal limits. And those that are designed or used

to transport 15 passengers or more, not for compensation also fall under federal limits. So this statute, conflicts with that for those -- those vehicles. The only wiggle that we have, if you will, is at the lower end for what -- just what you said, taxi cabs, so passenger vehicles. Those do not fall under the federal requirements and so, you know, there is some room there.

We did discuss this with the insurance department before we selected the limits for this. So we had some input from them as to what they thought the amount should be. But certainly at the lower end, we would be willing to sit down with them. At the higher end, I don't think that there's any option. But this is -- this is an obsolete provision that needs to change because it doesn't conform to what our state or federal requirements are.

REP. CARNEY (23RD): Okay, all right. I appreciate that. I just, you know, certainly hope between now and whenever, you know, the final Bill comes before the House in the Senate that -- you know, we'll have some time to sit down with both you and the taxicab companies to try to come up with something that both sides can agree on. Because like I said, I mean, especially right now and given all the issues with -- with small businesses, I just would hate to see another industry or any company really shut down because of something like this. So, you know, I'm sure -- I'm sure we'll have an opportunity to do that. So thank you very much, Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and Sharon.

COMM. MAGUBANE: Yep, we'll take that as a takeaway.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you. Representatives Zawistowski.

REP. ZAWISTOWSKI (61ST): I had it on mute, thank you. Thank you for being here today, Commissioner and staff. I have a question that is actually spurred by -- by a constituent. I understand that

there are rules about teens driving together. Are there any exceptions possibly for siblings? The reason that I'm asking this is, this man has two twin girls that are going to be turning 16 in about two years. And I was wondering if there are any exceptions, or if there are any exceptions, possibly being entertained for siblings, especially if they work together or other circumstances like that? Thank you.

COMM. MAGUBANE: I think this question came up last year, I think the answer was no, I'm not sure -- yeah this was asked last year and last year, the answer was no and it's still -- are we considering anything?

TONY GUERRERA: Good afternoon Representative. As you know, there is nothing on it right now in the work concerning that. But again, these are conversations that may take place in the future. There are some types of Public Hearings or whatever it may be to allow loosen that up. But as we found in the past, that-- you know, again, from parents and from the advocacy groups, there was no wiggle room in regards to that, because right now, it's consistent to show that in driving laws, the rate of fatalities on accidents have dropped. But again, those conversations do take place based on circumstance.

REP. ZAWISTOWSKI (61ST): Thank you. And I do understand the need for the laws. I just said, asking on behalf of a constituent who is going to have, you know, some issues with this coming up in the next few couple of years. So anyway, thank you very much. And thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you Representative. Representative Morrin Bello.

REP. MORRIN BELLO (28TH): Thank you. Thank you to the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner. As a freshman legislator, all this information is

tremendously helpful to me. I'll say to the previous Rep's comments. You know, as a parent of three daughters, it was difficult when you had a 17 year old driver that wasn't able to drive her sibling to high school or home from high school. So again, I understand the importance of that legislation for teen drivers.

But even just to allow that -- that driving back and forth to the high school would be something that I -- that I would, you know, be happy to support. We did have a good experience personally at the DMV during COVID as my 16 year old, got her learner's permit and then got her license. And we really appreciate the ability to make those appointments. My question is, regarding Section 34, the Emergency Vehicle Section, I've had a couple constituents question why we're adding the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection vehicles to that they expressed some concern with that addition. And I was wondering if you could provide a little history on that for me.

COMM. MAGUBANE: Sharon, again.

SHARON GEANURACOS: This actually -- this piece of our Bill was done in collaboration with the -- and I think they've submitted some pretty detailed testimony about why it's important for them to have rights to respond to emergencies. These are people who go to fires they go to HAZMAT spills. They are very critical first responders in most situations. And if you notice, the conditions are very limited in scope. So we wanted to be able to allow them to do that, to respond to emergencies, and it's critical to them.

In the past, they had done it under -- I think there's a Section in 14 (1) that allows the Commissioner to give authority to a vehicle to be considered an emergency vehicle. But one of the things we wanted to do was take that authority away, and have people have to get that according to a

specific statute rather than have it be used in a in a DMV definition. And so, you know, when he came to us and said, you know, we really need to be included in this, we actually support it very much.

TONY GUERRERA: Representative Morrin, nice to see you. This is Tony Guerrero. Yes, we've had discussion with the Milwaukee with the Commissioner and myself, and specifically for those reasons, because we ask the same thing. And they're very limited in scope, as she said, but I think what sent the message home was the issues were having that emergency situation, that they need to get there as soon as possible, even sometimes before even a state trooper there. So they can get their crews on site to stop those emergency issues that need to be done.

REP. MORRIN BELLO (28TH): Thanks so much. I appreciate it.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you. And it looks like for now, we have no additional questions. So I'll ask my Clerk to -- which is, with respect to two provisions, I think we'll hear testimony on moving forward. One is with respect to Section 13, which is concerning what types of services can be offered by partners of the Department of Motor Vehicles, there is concern amongst some of our potential -- for this to open a door for mass privatization of specific services.

So it would be helpful, I think if you could clarify the intent of that Section and the types of services and partnerships you're interested in. And the second is with respect to DMV seeking to increase from 60 to 90 days, the length of time for a person to register their vehicle in Connecticut, there are numerous individuals who are concerned about a growing number of unregistered vehicles or vehicles that are registered in surrounding states that have not come into the DMV to register yet. And I want to, I want to hear a little bit about the

reservation process. And why we want to move from 60 to 90 days.

And if there's an opportunity for us to say, you must register for an appointment within 30 days, and then you have up to 90 days to complete that process to get a date, but you have to come -- at least start the registration process within a tighter time window. So any input or information you can provide on these two provisions that would be terrific. Thank you.

COMM. MAGUBANE: So let me start with section 13 that amends 14-41, which is to amend the requirement for office or facility. The -- we have this germinated for the DMV is, our partners actually have past kiosk as well as an appointment system. And so we were evaluating whether or not (a) we could leverage both the kiosk as well as the appointment system. And this section actually prohibited us from doing that. And so as we thought further, around, really the ongoing increase for demand for our services, while at the same time with COVID, we moved away from people coming to the DMV and waiting for hours. And on any given day they were here for hours and hours, but we could extend the hours until we served everyone to an appointment system. We also recognize that the capacity is very limited.

So we are looking for ways to increase the number of channels where our constituents can receive service. We weren't looking at it as extending the types of transactions. But really, that was a germination of -- of this section. We can sit down and talk further. But right now we're just looking to leverage some of the capabilities that our partners had already developed rather than developing them separately, as well as really wanting to have a similar look and feel in terms of like -- right now our partners, you can make an appointment, come to the office receive a text that tells you that, you know, the appointment is going to be delay or have a

cancellation. So those were some of the capabilities that we were thinking about, with, you know how this was as they thought of that.

TONY GUERRERA: The second part, Mr. Chairman was about the registration for other states -- is that what we are concerned?

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Yes, increasing the time period for an individual to register their vehicle in Connecticut from 60 to 90 days. There is a competing proposal that has bipartisan support in the house, to say you have to do it within 30 days, they want to tighten that window.

And I'm trying to think through if there is a way to utilize the reservation system and the stresses and pressures that you guys have accommodating folks trying to get in with that desire to see folks more quickly begin the process, is it possible to say you must go online and secure a reservation within 30 days? But that reservation doesn't need to be completed for a 90 day period time window? Is that a reasonable solution? Or is this 90 day window, the -- what you guys need more than functionally--

COMM. MAGUBANE: I thought we were responding to the fact that if you want an appointment, and you went online today, you're probably not going to get it for 30 days or even 60 days. Again, it's all about this limited capacity during COVID. And so we people are being late when they were trying to get in touch with us to come into the office and we just couldn't take them. And so really, I think you're hearing that as a common thing that it was a good thing that that many people are thinking in Fairfield County at one point in one month was like 10,000 people who just did not have the capacity to service. And so we actually use extensions, in many instances, because we just couldn't take another demand. And we're now rolling out the online license renewal as we continue to figure out ways to really address that pent- up demand.

TONY GUERRERA: Chairman Lamar, obviously, that was something that we can discuss, you know, offline, too. But again, it's important system ought to do more so that we can accommodate more people too.

COMM. MAGUBANE: Yes, and those transactions have to be face to face. And so, I mean, that's -- that's really what the -- what the challenge is, but the extension was to address that issue.

SHARON GEANURACOS: I could also add here, musicians and artists, I don't think shortening the period is going to solve the problem you're trying to solve, because these are people who are trying to register their cars here. These are not people who are trying to avoid property tax, they're looking to come and register their car. So if you shorten it to 30 days, you're just going to make them be violators rather than use them, you know the amount of time that they actually need to register the vehicles here.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, I appreciate the answer. And there'll be a few representatives who are interested in talking with you. Maybe I'll convene a meeting after this Public Hearing. We can sort of iron out those details. And so people can understand that reservation system a little bit better. It certainly seems like the right approach to handle this issue. And maybe there's a different way to solve the problem.

Well, I have this minute, I just want to say thank you, Sharon, --Ms. Geanuracos for your incredible service to the state of Connecticut. I know you're completing your term pretty soon, probably this is last opportunity before the full Committee and I just want to say, you know, there were times when we disagreed in the past there are Bills that I've introduced in the past decade that you have had difficulty supporting. But we've always worked well together. You've been an incredible, invaluable

resource to this Committee. And someone that has been a reliable and steadfast advocate on a number of issues that impact the Department of Motor Vehicles and our entire constituency. And on behalf of the Transportation Committee, thank you for your service.

SHARON GEANURACOS: Thank you for those kind words. And our disagreements were always born out of passion.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Representative Meskers has a question.

REP. MESKERS (150TH): Yeah, along the lines of the registration. I was I was concerned as to whether or not we are clear on the registration and insurance coverage. So two things. One, I think there's a requirement on insurance that you would change your state of registration within 90 days of movement. And I'm hoping both -- for both the registration license, we know that our residents are aware that if they fail you to register in the state with their insurance company may put that insurance in jeopardy. So I would just like to make sure as part of the issue of registration and license renewal that we know that we emphasize that with our constituents, so they make sure they have adequate insurance coverage, and we collect our taxes.

COMM. MAGUBANE: Yes, I think when we met for the informational session, you did bring that up, and we are following up on that issue. So thank you again.

REP. MESKERS (150TH): Okay, thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): That exhausts the questions this morning -- this afternoon, sorry. So thank you all very much for your presentation. And thank you for your -- your availability moving forward. As you can see from the Public Hearing testimony, there are some concerns that the Committee advocates, and yourselves will have to sit down and iron out before

we can move forward. But we're hoping to accomplish that within the next few weeks. And we really, greatly appreciate your availability, and your commitment to the state of Connecticut, specifically during this very challenging time. Thank you very much, Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, and everyone else.

TONY GUERRERA: Thank you.

COMM. MAGUBANE: Thank you, everyone.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Moving on, the next public official. And the last Public Official within our hour that as registered is Representative Jane Garibay. Representative Garibay is to be followed by Doug Hausladen on the Public Officials list. And then we move to the general public list starting quickly right after 1pm. And the first person on that list is Sarah Roy. So Representative Garibay is available. We'll call on her now.

REP. GARIBAY: I'm here.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Representative Garibay, thank you for joining us this evening. Sorry. Okay,

REP. GARIBAY: Okay, thank you. Representative Lamar, Representative Simms, Senator Cassano, Representative Carney and Senator Somers and distinguished Members of the Committee. I am here today to testify in favor of Bill 5429. An act concerning pedestrian safety as a Representative Windsor and Windsor Locks, bolstering pedestrian safety is a very important part of the advocacy work that I do.

Both towns have incredibly busy state routes crossing through their main street business districts, and have seen numerous pedestrian deaths and injuries in recent years. Most recently, someone hit on a bicycle and another one crossing correctly a crosswalk. According to the Governor's

Highway Safety Association, there were 6590 pedestrian deaths in the United States in 2019, which was the highest yearly amount in over 30 years. Connecticut is not immune to this problem as the pedestrian death rate in our state has been steadily increasing in the last few years. This Bill delivers power and confidence back to pedestrians so that we can make our streets more walkable and livable. In addition to residents' safety, this Bill also helps local businesses that rely on window shoppers to stay afloat.

The COVID-19 Public Health crisis has ushered in an era of Main street desolation. But imagine the success that our downtowns will see at the end of the pandemic if we make our streets safer, and more walking-friendly.

By giving towns the ability to regulate local speed limits and designate pedestrian safety zones, we are giving them the power to economically survive and thrive. Furthermore, like many towns and cities between Springfield and New Haven, the main state routes located in both towns that I represent also happen to be within short walking distance of train stations along the Connecticut rail Hartford line.

This means that there is an abundance of residents living in transit-oriented housing development close to pedestrian crossing zones and popular local businesses. More people living in a downtown inevitably means more pedestrian walking downtown and contributing to the local economy, convenience, equity and environmental -- and environmental pedestrians in our state like they are second class citizens to cars then apartment living by the local train station in business district could become increasingly unpopular, whether it be along the Metro North New Haven line or the Hartford line. Creating pedestrian friendly policy will help downtown development and municipalities with transit oriented business and residential district.

This Bill sets out to make true progress for our communities. And I'm very excited to support its passage. I encourage this Committee to give it a favorable report and I look forward to supporting it in the future. Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Representative Garibay, for your testimony today for your leadership of the Connecticut Main Street Caucus in the legislature, and for helping us to understand the impact this has broadly in a city like mine in New Haven, to rural communities, suburban communities, and everything in between. The number and quality of the crashes that we're seeing are extraordinary. It's not just a Connecticut problem, it's a national problem, but we have a Connecticut responsibility, and still, I believe, goes a long way to meeting that responsibility. So thank you for your leadership and your testimony.

REP. GARIBAY: Thank you

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Are the questions for Representative Garibay? Seeing none, thank you so much for your time today.

REP. GARIBAY: Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Next up is Doug Hausladen to be followed by Sarah Roy. Is Mr. Hausladen available?

PHILIP MAINIERO: Mr. Hausladen should be joining the meeting now.

DOUG HOUSLADEN: Hi, good afternoon. How are you?

REP. LEMAR (96TH): We're doing good Mr. Hausladen, you are now live.

DOUG HAUSLADEN: Thank you so much Chairperson Lemar and Members of the Transportation Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak in strong support in favor of House Bill 5429, which will make the

necessary changes to our statute to improve the safety of all road users, particularly our most vulnerable users, involving schoolchildren and maintenance personnel.

My name is Doug Hausladen I've served as the Director of Transportation Traffic and Parking for the last seven years for the city of New Haven. And I'm excited to testify in favor of this Bill. Connecticut has undertaken many steps to advance our shared goal of zero fatalities and safer streets over the last decade, New Haven and the state passed Complete Streets. We've launched education campaigns called Street Smarts and other watch from UCT. We worked together at this Committee in the 2015 Bike Bill to update ways in which we can make -- design safer for all users. And now in this effort, we -- we applaud the committee's willingness to take the next step in committing ourselves to having a safe and equitable transportation system. And that's by launching a Vision Zero Council.

And by launching pilots for automated enforcement of license plates. We've had a number of folks before and there'll be many more testimonies after, but I just wanted to applaud you for removing these tickets from FOI, Freedom of Information requests, and also recommend continuing furthering and work with ACLU and the DMV to make sure that these tickets are also appropriately handled and strengthened for privacy concerns.

Just to be frank, however, no one should be immune from speeding and no one has a license to put our schoolchildren and our highway repair crews at risk. In New Haven, our license -- our city-wide speed limit is 25 miles an hour. And this statute will allow us to give -- issue any infraction for anyone going 12 miles over that. So that's a 50% over the speed limit is where we're at right now. And we applaud this -- this step and it's a great next step to help producing speeds and are in our streets.

Additionally, you know, New Haven has the highest percentage of residents who walk or bike to work in the 10 largest cities of New England. Almost 20% of our residents walk or bike to work. And we've done a lot in this Bill, and we applaud the efforts of your Committee in this Bill to continue to improve the safety for all road users, particularly pedestrians that are on signalized crosswalks and pedestrians at mid-block crossings for some technical clarifying language about daylighting, mid-block crossings.

This is a tremendous omnibus Bill that really addresses a lot of road safety issues that have been brought up by advocates throughout the years. And I want to again, applaud and thank the Committee for taking on this action and, and -- and having this as your first Bill of the year and very much -- not Senate Bill 1 but it's your SB -- your House Bill 1, if you will, and we really appreciate the fact that safety has been brought to the forefront. Finally, I'll just mention that having municipalities control speed limits makes a lot of sense for communities to design their streets the way that -- they their communities want their streets designed and ensuring that a traffic engineering study comes with it as well as some defensive language to prevent any abuses by municipalities, I think should be Very much commended as a great elements of this Bill. Finally, anti-dooring legislation creating the term dooring. Inside a state statute is very important.

The next step will of course, be educating and using that dooring statute when appropriate. But I think once we've created the dooring language, it's going to be also very appropriate to work with Tony Guerrera, and the chair -- and the DMV Commissioner to work on our education manuals, to make sure that these tweaks to our legislation in our language and follow through into our education manuals at the DMV.

And finally, thank you to creation of the greenways account, I think that's a terrific way to start re-investing the money that's coming from the license plates and commemorative license plate account into small scale studies in creating -- creating and finishing these gaps in our network. I'll pause there and just thank you, again, Chairman Lamar, and the Committee and willing to answer any questions that might be on the technicality side from the municipality.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you Mr. Hausladen for your testimony today, and for coming before us for the last number of years, to highlight a lot of the concerns that we see in Connecticut, and that you specifically see and tried to implement many of the speed and safety controls that we have at our availability or don't have at our availability, here in Connecticut. And thank you for highlighting so many different components of the Bill that we have for us. You're right, it is an omnibus Bill, and many of these issues have been brought to me over the years by different advocacy bases. It was, you know, an aside from representative Devlin two years ago, with respect to the greenways account, she highlighted for me that, you know, you know, the money from these license plates don't actually go where it's supposed to go. And so we quickly figured out a way of bringing those dollars in to this as well to make sure that we're investing in the right spaces.

But the technical components of this Bill, in large part are driven by folks like yourself, who helped me think through these issues, how they would be implemented. And I greatly appreciate that. That said there question from Representative Devlin.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I do have one question. You know, you -- and I also support certainly the pedestrian bicycle aspects of this Bill, we've had serious accidents and fatalities in the town of Fairfield. My own son was

cut off by a car and had a serious accident while doing a training ride on his bike in the back road. So I do support this, but a piece that I'm interested in your perspective on, is the education aspect. So you -- you hit on having this included in DMV manuals, but I'm not sure how broadly distributed those are or for someone who's not currently going to the DMV, you know, how they would access that. What do you see as the most effective and efficient ways of, you know, should this Bill move forward, and we're able to get it into statute to educate motorists, bikers, pedestrians about these changes, so that everybody's aware?

DOUG HAUSLADEN: That's is a great question. Thank you, Representative Devlin, and I commend Fairfield, I think you have an active bike walk group, if I'm not mistaken, that I've, -- I've talked with in the past. So I think the big trick on education is really about, how do we create a culture of safety? And that culture of safety can build on each other, you know, whether it's the DMV manual for all new licensed Connecticut drivers, they will then be treated and educated in this -- in these updates, just like we do every year with updates to our statutes, whether it's publicity press and a blitz, when the new laws are instituted on January 1 of each year, October 1, sometimes you hear a lot of advocacy and outreach surrounding those.

I think the biggest change is going to be on some level. You know, how do we also get our police departments to be ready to enforce and use this new language with "Stop, not Yield for Crosswalks?" You know, some other things about education are just straight up signage. How do we properly sign and mark the pavement to prevent people from parking within 25 feet of mid-block crosswalks that were -- that were striped and signed by local traffic authorities. You know, so I think it's going to be -- for each of the pieces. It's going to be a little bit different. You know, and the city of New Haven, I can speak to our efforts on education and

that's, you know, our city has long been at this and Representative Lamar used to be -- Alderman Lamar, who has been helping with this advocacy and education campaigns.

But we've created a number of advocacy organizations. I'm on the board of one called the New Haven Coalition for Active Transportation. We've trained a number of Lead Cycling Instructors. This is a national certification for cycling instructors. I'm an LCI, myself I passed in October. And so one way to do -- the education is just train people to go out and train others. So Train the Trainer methodologies. And we've been successful in having over 20 different education courses in 2020 with trainers like myself, training others how to ride bikes, and what's -- our ultimate goal is to get in the classroom of every second, eighth and 10th grade class. So second, eighth and 10th grade classes, maybe second, sixth and 10th grade, but, again, teach students how to be, you know, responsible users of the right of way. And we have captive audiences on some level with respect to K through 12.

The best communities in the country get into the gym class, if you will. And so with that end to that end, in April of 2020, we had our first ever gym -- gym class scheduled. Of course, that never happened because of Coronavirus. But that's the way we think to create this culture of driving, it's going to be a number of -- a number of different strategies. And the ultimate one is getting into every grade school and every high school course class and making sure that they're trained appropriately.

REP. DEVLIN (134TH): Thank you for sharing that. So really great suggestions. And hopefully we can pick up on those as we move ahead. Thanks.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you Representative Devlin. Seeing no other questions. Thank you, Mr. Hausladen for your testimony this afternoon. And thank you

for being a resource to this Committee on so many issues in the past and move forward. Next up, we have Sarah Roy, followed by Eli Sabin. We'll wait for a moment for Miss Roy to come into the meeting.

SARAH ROY: I'm here.

REP. LEMAR (68TH): Good afternoon, Ms. Roy. You are fully viewable and on the clock. Thanks for joining us today.

SARAH ROY: Awesome. Well, thank you Chairman Lamar and the Committee. I'm honored to be here and I really appreciate the opportunity to speak today in support of House Bill 5429. Around our country and in our state people are needlessly dying and getting injured at the hands of automobile drivers and this is wrong. Fifty-two pedestrians and six cyclists were killed in collisions with vehicles in Connecticut between January and November of 2020 alone.

That's more than one death per week last year. That's 58 mothers, fathers, grandparents, sisters, brothers, and cherished friends who were taken from the people who love them as a result of other human beings making bad choices or fail mistakes behind the wheel. And as many of our current systems of road design and driving that makes these bad decisions and fatal mistakes so prevalent. That's a Public Health crisis. Each year in the US people driving vehicles roughly as many killer roughly met as many human beings as people shooting guns.

This is a big and dangerous problem and communities need tools like House Bill 5429 if they are going to have a fighting chance at improving the safety of our roads and saving lives. In my own neighborhood I know families who don't allow their children to play in their own yards or ride their bikes on their own street because parents are petrified of them being hit by speeding or distracted driver.

I believe I speak for many parents in our town of Fairfield when I say that I'm tired of living this way. And I'm tired of asking our children to live this way. It is heartbreaking and wrong of us a society to rob children and other vulnerable populations such as people with disabilities and seniors have their right and their ability to explore their own community free from fear and being hit by speeding or distracted drivers. I'm here today to ask you to help communities help us keep -- keep us safe, especially the most vulnerable among us through your support of this bill.

I can't stress enough how much the tools provided in House Bill 5429 will aid communities and saving lives through provisions like the pedestrian right of way in crosswalks for people who affirmatively indicate their intent to cross. Increased fines for distracted driving, allowing municipalities to determine speed limits and create pedestrian safety zones, creating a pilot program for the use of camera enforcement in school zones and establishing a Vision Zero Council for the state. Please help us make our roads safer for everyone and help us prevent these senseless, horrific, and unnecessary deaths and injuries in our state in the future. I urge you to support House Bill 5429. Thank you for listening.

REP: LEMAR (96TH): Thank you Sarah, for your testimony today. And for being our first member of the public actually to take part in the 2021 legislative session via Zoom. This is the -- Transportation Committee is kind of the fit of the test case and utilizing this technology for upcoming year. We appreciate you making your way through the technological challenges that we all may be facing and joining us today this afternoon.

SARAH ROY: It worked.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): So far, so good.

SARAH ROY: Yeah.

REP. LEMAR (969TH): Representative McCarthy Vahey.

REP. McCARTHY VAHEY (133RD): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I'm thrilled, Sarah, thank you so much for your testimony. It's wonderful to have a member of our Fairfield Bike and Pedestrian Committee here today leading the charge along with New Haven and really proud of that. I wanted to ask you specifically about the crosswalk and the pedestrian crosswalks just to help clarify for everyone. This is a legislation we've been working on for a few years along with a lot of this, and I want to give incredible kudos to Chairman Lemar for the work that he's done for so many years. But the affirmatively indicating piece, can you just use plain person's language to say what does that mean about pedestrians AND crosswalks? So what would that be like if you were here in the neighborhood, and what would change with this with this law?

SARAH ROY: Well, Thank you, Representative McCarthy Vahey, I think it's my understanding that currently as a law, the state law as written is -- it's -- it gives discretion -- it leaves it up to the drivers discretion to determine whether or not they it's safe to they have to stop or yield for pedestrian in this law would, would make it more would put the priority back on the pedestrian when they affirmatively is it in my wrongs, saying they have to step into the slot into the crosswalk? Or they just have to indicate with their hand or how is exactly is that affirmative?

REP. McCARTHY VAHEY (133RD): Well, I met and I and I'm not meaning to put you on the spot. I think the issue we've had this conversation in the chamber and the house over the years that we've had it here in Connecticut, such that pedestrians have to already enter into the crosswalk in order to be able to have a vehicle yield. And this actually just helps us whatever way pedestrian is indicating affirmatively

that they intend to cross it a little bit more Oomph to the pedestrian and helps provide that for them. So I just want to thank you again, for the work that you've done in the community and for kicking off here.

SARAH ROY: I want to say I believe that I have firmly indicate as when I cross Stratfield Road in our community with my son to take him to school every day. I have a bright orange flag that I carry to make sure there's no question and I think that this law will just strengthen pedestrian's right to cross safely by making it no question that they have that right to do so. So thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Sarah. And thank you some representative McCarthy Vahey. Yes, that is the very scenario that we're attempting to address in almost every other state in the country. The requirement is not on you and your son to physically step into the crosswalk before triggering a car to yield for you.

We're trying to just bring Connecticut in line with almost every other state in the country, which states if you're at the curve and you're intending to cross, the car's got to stop. You shouldn't have to put yourself your family, a pet, you know, whatever into the middle of the crosswalk, before someone yields for you. Thank you for your testimony. With that, we are moving on to Eli Sabin to be followed by William Kaplan. Thank you, Miss Roy.

SARAH ROY: Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Is Mr. Sabin available?

PHILIP MAINIERO: He should be on now. Eli can you unmute yourself. It doesn't appear as if he has made it into the panelist -- hang on. He should have just come in now. Eli, if you can try unmuting or turning on your camera for us? There we go.

Good afternoon, Mr. Sabin, you are now online and available.

ELI SABIN: Good afternoon. Chair Lemar, Ranking Member Somers, Ranking Member Carney Vice Chair Cassano, Vice Chair Simms, and Members of the Transportation Committee. And thank you very much for the opportunity to speak with you this afternoon, especially given the difficult circumstances.

My name is Eli Sabin and I represent Ward one on the New Haven Board of Alders. And I'm testifying today to communicate my strong support for House Bill 5429. In 2020, 11 pedestrians and cyclists died on New Haven roads. For context. There were 20 homicides in the city last year. And across the state in 2020, the Department of Transportation reported that 65 pedestrians were killed. On the New Haven Board of Alders I represent thousands of people who walk and bike around downtown and all over our city. And over the last few years -- few years there have been numerous accidents and several people have been injured or killed in my district, including some of my constituents.

House Bill 5429 will take important steps to address the traffic safety issues that affect so many in my community and in communities across Connecticut. Renting towns and cities the authority to change local speed limits create pedestrian safety zones and pilot automated speed enforcement will keep people safe and there are numerous studies showing that these strategies are effective. Establishing a Vision Zero counseling requiring Office of the state traffic administration to consider pedestrians and cyclists when reviewing projects will help ensure traffic safety is prioritized in future policymaking.

Other provisions of the Bill will help protect pedestrians in crosswalks decrease distracted driving and increase public awareness of traffic

enforcement. This Bill builds on years of traffic safety advocacy and legislative action, and would help us prevent the many deaths and injuries that happen on roads across Connecticut every year. Low income residents and people of color are disproportionately affected by dangerous driving and unsafe streets. And traffic safety is a critical issue of social and racial justice. Passing this Bill is a key priority for me personally, and for many others in the New Haven community. And in cities and towns around the state. I strongly urge support of House Bill 5429, in order to favorably vote it out of Committee. Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you Alder Sabin, for your testimony today and for joining us on our first Zoom Public Hearing. The work that has been done in New Haven is -- has been referenced as a model for the state, which is great to hear that so much of the work that we've done for the last 20 years is being emulated to help provide pedestrian safety, for so many of our fellow Connecticut residents. But you highlighted the sad fact that it hasn't been enough. And frankly, the increases in fatalities and crash fatality across the country largely is by extra speed, distracted driving both in hand and onboard. And the size and weight of vehicles being greatly increased over the last 20 years and it's highlighted that one of the primary causes of fatality is just the difference between going 25 miles per hour and 30 miles per hour.

Now you're about 30% more likely to have a fatal accident if you're hit at 30 miles per hour than you are at 25. But that slight -- slight increase in speed is the difference between an unfortunate accident and a tragic one. And so it is incumbent upon all of us, and places like New Haven that are across Connecticut, to pay for these sorts of changes. So I appreciate your -- your support here today. Are there any questions for Mr. Sabin. Seeing none, thank you all.

ELI SABIN: Thank you, representative for all your work on this.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Next up is William Kaplan, to be followed by Jim Travers. Mr. Kaplan.

PHILIP MAINIERO: It does not appear Mr. Kaplan is joined the room and we have admitted the next speaker.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Okay, Mr. Travers. And for reference, moving forward, we will reserve Mr. Kaplan's space, if we recognize that he is having technical difficulties, we'll find a way to accommodate his testimony later on in the proceedings.

JIM TRAVERS: Hi, thank you. Honorable members of the Transportation Committee, my name is Jim Travers, and I'm the Bureau Chief of Transportation, Traffic and Parking for the city of Stamford. I appear before you to respectfully request that a portion of House Bill 5429, specifically the section referencing speed limits in municipalities, maintained with the Connecticut Department of Transportation for their concurrence review, and final recommendation.

As a transportation professional overseeing these two divisions and two of the largest cities in Connecticut, New Haven and now in Stamford, I have a history of complete streets adoption, and implementing Best Practices with respect to the proposal to allow me to municipalities to set their own speed limits, I have concerns regarding this proposal. But first, I must applaud you for taking up the issue of pedestrian safety. Tragedies involving pedestrians and cyclists are occurring all too often on our roadways, and particularly at our intersections, a shared space with many turning movements, and where traditional traffic enforcement is often challenging.

I understand that state-wide, these numbers underscore the need and lend to the urgency to improve the safety of our roadways. But my concerns here today are focused on allowing municipalities to set speed limits within their borders. I for one, appreciate the checks and balances that the current system provides. The submission seeking approval from the Connecticut Department of Transportation requires the municipality to perform a thorough review of the roadway condition and design and to determine the appropriate speed limit.

During my tenure here in Stamford, I have interacted frequently with the Connecticut Department of Transportation regarding speed limit reductions on city roads, I've always found their input to be valuable, and ensuring the safe -- ensuring safe passage, sorry. As transportation professionals, we often review the design speed of a roadway.

Setting arbitrary speed limits without looking into other factors as relates to speed will simply not be addressing the root of the problem. I urge you to look at the success that we have had here in Stamford. During my tenure, we have made a significant investment to retime all the city's traffic signals to the posted speed limit of the roadway. This has been single handedly one of the most successful endeavors of this administration. The results have been an overall 14% reduction in travel time, with some quarters as much as a 42% reduction. This has greatly helped reduce driver frustration and attributed to the city's lowest overall crashes in the past eight years. Additionally, in 2019, and my data is from 2019 prior to COVID. Right.

Additionally, in 2019, we had the lowest buy crashes on record. And even though we had -- even though we know more people are cycling now more than ever. Furthermore, Stamford's pedestrian fatalities are considerably lower than state -- state and national average. And we have accomplished this. Even with

the city's default speed limit of 30 miles an hour. Allowing municipalities to lower their own speed limits without any oversight, in my opinion is dangerous. It does nothing to require the municipality to look at their own infrastructure as a leading cause of these crashes. I believe that we would be better on supporting cities and towns there are traffic signal timing.

I've long been a supporter of complete streets. I -- having worked in New Haven at a time when the city was the first city to adopt Complete Streets legislation. During my tenure, we looked holistically at traffic crashes -- at traffic crash reduction, focusing on the engineering of city streets, a community engaged street smarts safety program, and a strong relationship with law and law enforcement. I have adopted these same principles here in Stamford, and we are seeing the results of these actions.

Our Connecticut Department of Transportation is filled with a robust team of qualified professionals that can add review and valuable oversight to the cities and towns recommendations and approach and proposals. Again, I feel we would be better suited to support cities and towns by providing funding options to improve our signalization network, install proven countermeasures, and help re-design our roadways, particularly our intersections in a safe and efficient manner. Stamford did it. And we should be looking at the results here and how they can be replicated in other municipalities. I reviewed my testimony today with our Chief of Police and he concurs with my concerns and furthers the request that this process remained with OSHA for approval.

That being said, I do support representative Omar's proposal for allowing automated speeds enforcement cameras, as well as clarifying language relating to pedestrians at the crosswalks. And stiffer penalties for distracted driving. But again,

enforcement alone will not fix these problems. In fact, it has been proven not only here in Stamford, but in cities all across America that we must look at the entirety of the transportation network to fix this problem. Thank you for your consideration.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Mr. Travers, for your testimony today. And for your work on behalf of two of our great cities here in Connecticut, I greatly appreciate the time and effort and passion that you've brought to traffic safety, both in my home city and your home city of New Haven. And in Stamford.

I just want to highlight with your concerns about the traffic administration having retaining control over the establishment of local speed limits, they have actually submitted testimony saying that they no longer think that they are the appropriate entity to be doing this. But they do trust that the local transit authorities have the capacity and the talent in many cases, to do this locally, and that they are the best administrators, that's State Department for Transportation, so that they believe that this authority should be hosted locally, as well as that Bureau.

So I think there's some work that we need to do to make sure that the rigor and capacity at all levels of government is there. We don't want arbitrary speed limits set. But we do think that the time has come to allow this conversation to move forward. So allow some municipalities who've done the research and developed a local speed controls to incorporate lower speed limits and pedestrian safety zones, that they are able to individually establish meeting certain criteria and local roads where a local traffic authority has capacity to engage that level of engineering and detailed analysis.

I think that's where department transportation, and OSTA actually are now as well, I think that's conversation we can continue to have. But I greatly

value your input to the committee. I really appreciate it. I know representative Blumenthal has a question for you.

REP. BLUMENTHAL (147TH): I see you Jim? I want to say first of all, thanks for being here. Thank you for your testimony. And thank you for all your work for the city, I can testify personally as to the benefits of the re-signalization project as a resident of Stamford, and a number of other projects that you and the administration have accomplished. And some of them have been award winning, and so congratulations on those.

I guess -- you know, I want to ask you a question about your testimony primarily just to kind of get a better understanding of your concerns regarding the speed limit provision. And I guess to me, it sounds like your concern is that cities and towns will see safety concerns at a certain area and instead of doing a comprehensive review, of kind of all the engineering concerns, they'll just lower the speed limit Is that a fair summarization of the concern?

JIM TRAVERS: Well, I think there's two concerns. One, I do think that we would be remising in looking at this system holistically. Right. You know, we -- we did it here in Stamford, we are -- we have the lowest rate, you know, we have one pedestrian fatality last year, it was a longest span in between in between pedestrian fatalities that we have ever had. Right.

And one is one to many. Right, it but, you know, what we have -- you know, the issue of signal retiming, has single handedly been, I believe one of the most -- the best thing that this administration could have ever done. The positive feedback that we hear, because we were doing driver frustration, complete streets is that it is just that it is complete, it is making sure that we provide a roadway that's effective for all users, right? I think that, you know, we have to look at where the

successes are, and -- and mimic those I don't -- I do I -- have concerns when it is simply just lowering the speed limit, right, we hear the requests all the time.

And it is not a lowering of the speed limit that is going to fix this situation is about how we designed our roads, if we over designed our roads, and we put -- and we put an arbitrarily low speed limit on it, it's not going to be followed. And the issue is going to be that to the police department to expect to enforce something that -- that they don't have the ability to enforce today. And it is because we designed something wrong. And we as transportation professionals, and as we as administrators in city government, we have a responsibility to make sure that our roads are designed correctly.

And that's a challenge for many municipalities financially, that's really difficult. And, you know, we were able to do that with funding that came out of our cog right. And that's what I would request that we look at the funding that comes out of archives, and how we can best support real change that happens in city streets that makes it safer, because we're making changes to city roads that are that are having the reverse effect, right. And we're not looking at the fact that we changed something and had a reverse effect. And we have, you know, a number of pedestrian fatalities, look at why you're doing it and come up with those. It is not simply lowering the speed limit that's going to fix the problem.

REP. BLUMENTHAL (147TH): Okay, thank you for your testimony. I just have one follow up stick to my two question. Question limit. I just want to ask, would you have -- would your concern be delayed somewhat if the -- I know there's an engineering design study requirement right now. If that design study requirement were kind of more of a comprehensive, complete streets approach would that -- would that mitigate some of your concerns around

allowing municipalities more discretion to lower their speed limits?

JIM TRAVERS: You know, so. So again, I would go back to experience, right. And in my experience here in Stamford, I have put a number of requests up to OST, for first speed limit review. Right. Some have been approved, some have not been approved but it is that dialogue that we have that really talks about what is the future vision? How is that going to be? Right? So a complete streets approach, if the municipalities is the only single person who has the that has the review over that I just -- I prefer -- I appreciate the fact that I have partners at DoT that is the second ears and eyes that we look at. You know, when we look at our -- our road investments that we've made here, you know, I have a partner at Fuss & O'Neill and you know, it is those partnerships, it's looking at other individuals who come together to give -- to give the best credence to -- to what we can -- what we can establish. And you know, so if there is a complete treating, is it good? I think it's better when somebody else looks at it and somebody -- and there's a check and balance.

REP. BLUMENTHAL (147TH): Thanks very much.

JIM TRAVERS: All right. Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you Representative Blumenthal. Are there any additional questions for Mr. Travers? Seeing on thank you so much for your time today.

JIM TRAVERS: All right, thank you very much.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Mr. Clerk is William Kaplan in at this point? I will move on to Samantha Dynowski to be followed by Constance Vickers. So William Kaplan, was not here when we first called him and I don't know if he is now since joined us. If he has

not, Samantha then Dynowski is next on our list to be filed by the City of Bridgeport.

PHILIP MAINIERO: We do have Samantha, she should be joining us now from the city Bridgeport.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Samantha are you -- I see Samantha. Samantha you are live and before us on the Transportation Committee today. Thank you for joining us.

SAMANTHA DYNOWSKI: Thank you, Representative Lemar and Members of the Committee. Congratulations on your first virtual Public Hearing things to be seem to be going very smoothly. My name is Samantha Dynowski, I am state Director of Sierra Club's Connecticut Chapter. On behalf of the Sierra Club and are more than 40,000 members and supporters in Connecticut. I want to thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 5429. I have submitted written testimony which I will briefly summarize.

Sierra Club, Connecticut strongly supports measures that will improve safety for pedestrians and bikers and measures that will increase access to pedestrian and bike pathways to protect people and the planet. As you are well aware and others have stated pedestrian deaths have been increasing. Safety measures are essential for Connecticut residents who do not own vehicles, and walk bike and use public transit to get around in their daily lives. Connecticut has four cities Hartford, New Haven, Waterbury, and Bridgeport and the top 30 cities in the US with over 100,000 in population that have zero car households. So safety measures are absolutely critical. They're also critical to encourage more car-free transportation.

According to the latest greenhouse gas inventory from the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. The transportation sector here in Connecticut accounts for 38% of greenhouse gas

emissions in the state. Our Global Warming Solution Act calls on our state to reduce greenhouse gases by 20 -- by 45%, under 2001 levels by 2030, and 80% by 2050. So becoming less reliant on cars is one of the many things that we can and must do to reduce greenhouse gases from the transportation sector. And to create an atmosphere where people feel comfortable getting out of cars, safety is absolutely important.

It is vitally important for those who -- who are already out of cars and not creating pollution. But it is also for our, our livable planet in the future. So thank you for your attention to this important issue. And I urge your support for this bill.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Samantha, for your testimony today and for joining us on behalf of the Sierra Club and your work on so many issues before the Committee in the past two years and this year as well. I know we'll likely see you again on other issues that we'll be confronting. Are there any questions for Samantha? Seeing none, thank you for joining us this afternoon.

SAMANATH DYNOWSKI: Thank you very much.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Next up is Constance Vickers on behalf of the City of Bridgeport.

PHILIP MAINIERO: Mr. Chair, actually, James Baraja is the person speaking. Constance registered him but there's a little confusion with the registration.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): No, no worries, James, you're going to take Constance's spot followed by William Kaplan, if he is available if not Andy Matthews.

JAMES BARAJA: Okay, very good, sir. You can hear me. So I've also submitted written testimony, but I'll just highlight it as well. Good afternoon,

Chairman Lamar, Vice Chair Cassano, Vice Chair Simms, Ranking Member Somers, and Ranking Member Carney. Thank you for bringing this important Bill to a Public Hearing before your Committee. My name is Deputy Chief James Baraja at the Bridgeport Police Department. This proposed legislation has caused two key issues that I would like to comment on.

One is the importance of protecting pedestrians and also a concern over increasing fines for violations. Bridgeport is a large urban center and I have firsthand seen the toll that pedestrian fatalities or serious injuries have had on members of our community. I've been lucky enough to see several mayoral administrations take this issue on with everything from re-engineering city streets, intensive educational programs, and of course law enforcement actions. However, pedestrian safety continues to be a serious area of concern. With an increase in pedestrian accidents and fatalities in the last few years. The ongoing nature of these incidents suggests that we need to continue that effort. And I believe that this legislation is an important first step. I support the creation of the Vision Zero Council and its propose charged to bring partners together to plan data-driven planning and community-based solutions to this dire issue, I would encourage that local law enforcement would be included in this consult in some capacity to provide on-the-ground input to the discussion.

In regards to fines, I want to express the concern I have in that during these difficult economic times, these type of -- types of fines may be considered oppressive, and may not add to the deterrent effect in the way that they were able to in the past. Even with the fund to eventually return the collection of fines back to municipalities, I'm concerned that this will disproportionately impact residents in less affluent areas where automotive congestion and pedestrian traffic is more prevalent. Overall, I am supportive of House Bill 5429. And I hope that my

concerns will be taken into consideration to make this Bill a stronger and more equitable solution to tackle our pedestrian safety issues. And on a personal note, I just wanted to say to the Chair and to the Committee, the civility and the compassion expressed during the session that I've observed, is so refreshing. And I wanted to point out that as a newbie to this process, I was very impressed.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you James, that's deeply appreciated, and I want to thank you for your testimony and for your willingness to give us some advice on how we may improve it. It's always good to hear where there may be concerns where those opportunities for addressing those concerns may lie. And so we will certainly be attempting to ensure that we have the best possible Bill that comes out of this committee. And the insight from our largest city, the city of Bridgeport is greatly appreciated. Representative Carney.

REP. CARNEY (23RD): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And thank you very much, Deputy Chief Baraja. Thank you for your service. And thank you for coming here today. I just have one question. I'm just thinking, is your experience as a police officer, whether you could shed some light on -- on how this could impact, you know, municipalities within this Bill. So the part about allowing municipalities to set speed limits on certain municipal roads, the only -- the one thing that kind of popped up in my head was if say, for example, you know, there's a road that connects Bridgeport and Fairfield, that's, -- you know, that's a municipal roads, not a state road, and if, say one of the communities sets it at one speed limit versus the other. I mean, do you see any issues with that happening? Or, you know, I'm sure there'll be some communication. But could there be potential issues there?

JAMES BARAJA: So the short answer is for -- for from my level in operations, no. The reason being

that we basically take -- we'll take a look at the site, and we'll see, oh, that's route one. In this section, it's 35 miles an hour in this section, it might be a little bit more. So we basically go by the signage, and we're also very heavily invested in going, not to what they used to do in the old days, which would be pick a spot and say, this is a chronic problem spot for us. No, we're looking at the fresh data and saying, where have we had recent trends or recent spikes, and that's where we're directing our enforcement actions. So other than the fact that you might get a little bit of variation, like for example, Route 1 is a perfect example. I can come in all the way from Fairfield, Westport, Southport straight through to Stratford. And it's all municipal streets, it's a state road, and there might be various different, you know, signs or speed zones, but we can easily navigate that.

REP. CARNEY (23RD): Yeah, 'because I mean, one of my concerns is just be like, say, if, you know, one town sets, you know, at 25 miles an hour, and you're coming in from another town that say, it's 30 or 35. And then that person enters the town, and there's, you know, a penalty or to be had because of that.

JAMES BARAJA: Yeah, I also rely on officers' discretions, years and years ago, I went to a wedding in Florida, I met a state trooper down there. We were talking about the business. And he mentioned, hey, listen, how do you find our roads? And I was like, Oh, it's awesome. It's great. You know, I think you guys are doing a good job. And he said, well, just remember, never go over 10 miles over the posted limit. I was like, why? He said, because that's our rule. We'll give you a little bit of leeway. So if you're going 40 in a 35, or you're okay. But the main thing is that catching the outliers because those are the people who are seriously going to impact the communities in terms of accidents, and speed equals damage. So there's a

huge difference for us between like a 35 mile an hour crash, and a 45 mile an hour crash.

REP. CARNEY (23RD): Well, again, thank you so much Deputy Chief for coming out here and spending a few minutes talking to us today.

JAMES BARAJA: Thank you for support, sir.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you. And thank you, again for indicating the role that law enforcement and these rules can play. I think Representative Carney hits on an issue I've heard from constituents. You know, there's --other communities have utilized, you know, this type of policing.

And, you know, we moved away from red light cameras, because we saw other communities change the yellow light sequencing and less than the time of yellow lights. And so I thought that was a pretty relevant concern. If we couldn't stop that from happening locally, we maybe need to move away from that technology for a few years, until there was better protections in place. And so we need instead of the right way to go and I work closely with law enforcement chiefs saying like this is the sort of initiative that make the most sense to combat what we're seeing on our roadways. So I think it -- it's helpful to have you here talking about that. Representative Carney highlights an issue that a constituent brought up, they brought up an old Dukes of Hazzard episode that they had watched, where the chief would wait for Boeing, I don't know, I never watched that show Boeing, whoever it is,

REP. CARNEY (23RD): Owen Lou, by the way.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Owen Lou, sorry, to come down the road, and then the police chief would pull down the speed limit sign and suddenly the 35 miles an hour, and then it would be 25. And they're fearful that that's what we were allowing here was that type of activity on behalf of our local police

departments. And I appreciate you lending, the safety and sanctity component of this. And the fact that there are real traffic engineers, and public safety people involved in this authority that would look at these routes and determine the appropriate speed and speed limit has potentially alluded to by somebody else. This is an actual professional engineering process and safety process that this would go through before we establish a lower speed. Thank you for that.

JAMES BARAJA: Yes, sir.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Are there any other questions for the Deputy Chief? Seeing none, thank you very much for your time today. William Kaplan, And then Andy Matthews, to be followed by Cierra Patrick. For reference to anyone following at home, the list of speakers is presented in order on our website that you can follow on if you're having a question about where you fit inside of the current Order. We are just about finishing up our Public Officials list and we're going back and forth with the members of the general public as well. The next two people, Andrew Matthews, followed by Cierra Patrick will be before us. And then if you have any other questions, our clerk, Phil Mainiero is available. Thank you. Mr. Matthews, I see you are unmuted and live before us on the Transportation Committee. It's great to have you before us today.

ANDY MATTHEWS: Thank you. Good afternoon, Senator, Representative Lamar, and distinguished members of the Transportation Committee. We hope you and your families are healthy and safe during these difficult times. My name is Andrew Matthews. I'm currently the Executive Director of the Connecticut State Police Union, former Union President from 2010 to 2018, and a retired Sergeant with the State Police. We represent approximately 897 trooper sergeants and master sergeants and we appreciate the opportunity to speak before you today. We're here today to speak in opposition of only Section 16 of raised

Bill 5429, which is specific to speed cameras on limited access highways.

Together we have an obligation and a history of preventing injuries and deaths of pedestrians, motorists roadway workers. But we must also be -- fulfill our oath of office by protecting the constitutional rights of all citizens. While we're committed to working with the proponents of this Bill to find solutions to their concerns, we do not support the use of unreliable speed enforcement cameras on limited access highways. Under Connecticut General Statute 29-7 which states in part, "the Commissioner of the Emergency Services and Public protections shall device and make effective a system for the purpose of preventing and detecting any violation of criminal law or the laws relating to motor vehicle. "Connecticut law does not allow the delegation of police powers with respect to detection of speeding vehicles on roadways and does not allow for cameras to substitute the training, experience, knowledge and discretion of sworn police officers.

This Bill proposes the use of speed cameras to replace state troopers on limited access highways and does not allow for the accused to have the right to cross examine their accuser, state troopers. Not speed cameras should be used to protect the motorist and our work zone employees on limited access highways. When a speeding motorist travels through a work zone, a speed camera cannot initiate a motor vehicle stop to eliminate a danger -- dangerous or reckless operator on the highway. We should focus more on the offending vehicle before they get to the work zone with the employees. This Bill delegates the statutory authority of law enforcement officers to a privately-owned for-profit corporation and sub-contracts the work of law enforcement. Privatizing law enforcement responsibilities, could lead to fraud, abuse, and litigation for violation of individual's constitutional rights, and prevents officers from using discretions with families on the

roadways. Based on the foregoing, we respectfully request this Committee not to approve Section 16 of the proposed legislation in its current form. I thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today and I'm available for any questions.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Mr. Matthews, for your testimony today. And, frankly, we've disagreed on this issue for a couple of years. But you've actually always been someone that we've been able to have advocates speak with and work out concerns as much as we can. I know, we're not likely to end up in complete agreement on this. But I think the dialogue has been productive. And I think there's understanding on both sides of where we're trying to go. And if we ultimately don't see eye to eye on this, I do actually appreciate the level of thought that you bring to this conversation and the commitments of your members that you have. And I hope that relationship continues between ourselves and how we meet these workers who were asking for the protection.

ANDY MATTHEWS: Thank you, sir.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Are there any questions for Mr. Matthews? I see none, thank you so much for your time today. And I will be reaching out to you to set up some meetings.

ANDY MATTHEWS: Thank you be safe, everyone.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Next up, we have Mayor Bronin from the city of Hartford.

MAYOR BRONIN: Thanks very much, Chairman Lemar, Mr. Chairman Cassano and Members of the Committee. Grateful for the chance to testify today. As -- as you all know, traffic safety, particularly for those walking and biking has been a priority for many of our communities and throughout Connecticut. We've seen an increase in traffic fatalities over recent years, the importance of increasing safety in our

communities, particularly important for cities like Hartford, where about a third of our households don't own cars. And we're -- we're trying our best to make our city more welcoming and hospitable to bike and pedestrian activity. But of course, there also is a need just to increase road safety in general. There's a lot that we are doing, there's an awful lot more that we have to do at the local level. But I do believe strongly that there is room for state leadership and state partnership on this. And I think the -- the -- a number of Bills that are under consideration.

The Committee would meaningfully increase traffic safety and also meaningfully increase our ability as a community to promote that goal. So in particular, I strongly support House Bill 5429's provisions to allow municipalities to set lower speed limits, along with the increased share of traffic ticket revenue to municipalities to assist with the funding of that enforcement. Because, of course, speed limits without effective enforcement is not effective.

I also strongly support the provision to allow for a pilot of speed camera enforcement in school zones, I would encourage consideration of an even broader pilot and allow communities to use cameras more broadly, but very supportive of the proposal to pilot speed cameras in school zones. And, you know, I think it is also time for us to look as some proposed to do, to look at what other states are doing and Connecticut is an outlier when it comes to the lack of any penalty for opening a door into in a way that obstructs the roadway or obstructs another vehicle. So I also support the proposal for a fine for dooring. Those are -- I'll leave my initial comments there. I'm submitting written testimony as well. But again, grateful to the Committee for considering these Bills and hope that they will move forward.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you Mayor Bronin for your testimony today. And for lending a voice from our capital city, about the impacts that we're seeing broadly and all cities, but all rural and suburban communities across Connecticut as well. This is a state issue that we've got to take seriously, we've got to incorporate different tools and -- and look at what other neighboring states and localities are doing. And I think 5429 is based largely on conversations I've had with advocates across the state for a number of years. And I know you hear from the same people that I do talking about improving livability and connectivity of our communities, and I thank you for lending your voice from the city of Hartford.

MAYOR BRONIN: Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Are there any questions for Mayor Bonin? Seeing none, thank you again for your time today.

MAYOR BRONIN: Thanks very much.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): We have two individuals so far who we have called but have not logged in. We will keep the window open and our Clerk will be cognizant if they do sign up at later point. They are Cierra Patrick on behalf of the City of Groton, and William Kalan, next on our public list is Richard Belitsky to be followed by Erin McCleary.

PHILIP MAINIERO: Rich should be in the room now. Rich if you could unmute yourself.

RICHARD BELITSKY: Okay, am I in now?

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Good afternoon, Richard.

RICHARD BELITSKY: Hi. Thank you. Are you ready for me to begin?

REP. LEMAR (96TH): We are.

RICHARD BELITSKY: Okay. Thank you very much for this opportunity to testify. My name is Richard Belitsky. I live in Guilford and work in New Haven. I'm a member of the faculty and former Deputy Dean for Education at the Yale School of Medicine. I'd like to begin with a story. It was a beautiful spring day, April 19, 2008, when Mila Rainoff was struck by a vehicle as she crossed the York street South frontage road intersection in New Haven. Mila was a fourth year medical student at Yale at the time, just one month from her graduation and started her residency program in emergency medicine. Mila's view of the oncoming traffic was secured by a truck leaving the loading dock at Yale New Haven Hospital and a car entering that intersection was speeding up to beat the red light. Mila was just steps from reaching the curve and died of her injuries the following day.

Mila was 27 years old. It was my job as Deputy Dean for Education at the Medical School to call her parents residing in California, to inform them of what had happened to their daughter. It was the most difficult and heartbreaking phone call of my professional career, a feeling that has never left me.

At the time this happened, we were all aware of the difficulties of that intersection. In front of the Medical School and hospital. We crossed it with trepidation every day, our patients going to appointments, healthcare providers, faculty, staff, students, residents.

Every day, we saw trucks entering from a loading dock and crossing multiple lanes of traffic, cars speeding to beat the red light, vehicles accelerating because that street is a direct entrance to the highway. Pedestrians trying to navigate long lights weaving through a congested intersection with multiple lanes of fast moving

traffic. It was, we all knew an accident waiting to happen.

And then it did. At the time, we promised the Rainof family that we would do everything we could to make that intersection safe to correct the conditions that had led to their daughter's death. But here we are 13 years later, despite the hard work of many dedicated and caring people. And with some improvements in place, this remains a very dangerous intersection. And that promise to the Rainof family has not yet been capped. It is in this context that I urge you to pass Resolution House Bill 5429. While there are many important aspects of this Bill, I especially want to emphasize the importance of the provision to pilot automated speed enforcement because doing something to decrease, and hopefully stop the speeding of vehicles is critical to ensuring pedestrian safety at this intersection, and many like it throughout our state. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you for your time and testimony today. And it was up from New Haven. We're familiar with these stories. And I'm sorry. I think I just thank you for your time, and testimony today, Richard and I appreciate you sharing that with us and bringing a story about why this is such an issue for us locally. And the number of issues that we've had in our community over the last few decades is the reason, frankly, why I'm in the position I'm in. I thank you, Richard. I don't know if I have any words that I can offer at this time, except thank you for your testimony.

RICHARD BELITSKY: And thank you for the work you're all doing.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Are there any questions for Mr. Belitsky? Seeing none, thank you again for your testimony.

RICHARD BELITSKY: You're welcome.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): We're going to move on to Erin McCleary to be followed by Caroline. Ms. McCleary, you are up if you can unmute. There you are. Erin, did we lose you?

ERIN McCLEARY: Here I am.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): There you are. Thank you for joining us today.

ERIN McCLEARY: Yes. Can you hear me Okay?

REP. LEMAR (96TH): We can.

ERIN McCLEARY: All right, excellent. Well, first of all, good afternoon, Representative Lamar, Senators Cassano and Representatives Somers and Carney. I do want to appreciate the opportunity to speak today regarding Senate Bill 261. And I'm -- I am Dr. Erin McCleary. I am an Optometrist Board Certified and practicing Connecticut for the last 14 years. And I am the immediate past President of the Connecticut Association of Optometrists. And I am -- I practice currently in Clear Horizon Eye care in Plainville, Connecticut. First of all, I want to applaud and thank you for continuing to support vision screenings as a requirement for licensure for all of our licensed applicants in the state of Connecticut. Obviously, I think this is something that's very important.

However, there are a couple of things with the new language. First of all, it is requiring the applicant to require a medical professional to fulfill a certification in lieu of obtaining a vision screening, or at least that's the way it reads. And it is defined within the statutes who these medical professionals should be which are definitely appropriate. They include physicians, ophthalmology, optometry, PAs. However, in

requiring division assessment to be completed by a medical professional, it does have an impact on applicants, as well as the professionals themselves. And first of all, this now burdens the applicants with finding a medical professional, likely at cost that's not covered by potential insurance.

And secondly, it does potentially open up a question of medical liability for some of these professionals. Specifically, for example, in my practice, if I had a new patient who says I want a vision screening for the DMV, I've never seen them before, if they were to come in and I check the visual acuity, I do a visual field. But if I do not do a comprehensive examination, and I miss a diagnosis of glaucoma, or retinal hole, but I've done that screening component, there now is some potential liability for me as a provider. Further in some additional language within the new statute, it does specifically dictate that vision standards are supposed to meet the regulations adopted under 1445A.

And this, in fact, is actually a little bit more specific to what is required, as opposed to what the former language was on just a general vision screening. These are specific to 2040 certain degrees of visual field. And they almost make it seem like it's a comprehensive examination, as opposed to just a vision screening. And I'm not sure if this was the original intent of incorporating that language. I can speak to the impact of these subtle language changes and how it impacts my practice directly.

I had a patient, actually a new patient, an 18-year-old male, who they called my office drastic, you know, confirmed last week, because they have a permanent screening test. And they needed to have a visual field form filled out, and they couldn't find any providers to provide that service for them. Fortunately, I was able to find an opportunity to see this patient, as a new patient. However, you

know, post-COVID, my office is already very busy. And it's hard to, you know, that is my office, many other offices are going to have a difficult time filling in all of these DMV screenings. In closing-

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PHILIP MAINIERO: Erin I -- I hate to interrupt, unfortunately, we've, and we've hit that three minute time limit for speaking. So if you could just kind of wrap up.

ERIN McCLEARY: Absolutely. I am in the last, like four sentences.

PHILIP MAINIERO: Thank you.

ERIN McCLEARY: Basically I was just going to say, I do have a potential solution for the language changes. One would be that maintaining the free vision screening option at the DMV, but then in addition, allowing that medical certification process, this will give your constituents the choice to still obtain a free screening, but at the same time gives them a free opportunity to get that medical professional. So with COVID, if they don't feel comfortable going to the DMV, it will allow them to have that medical professional opportunity. It spreads the numbers over DMV and the providers. And ultimately, it's all about safety. We want safe drivers on the road. We want that vision screening to be part of that. But slight change in language potentially help that more on the terms of the applicants. Thank you so much for the time to speak today.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Erin, I'm having a hard time accessing the public testimony. Did you submit that language in your submitted testimony?

ERIN McCLEARY: I did. Yes. I submitted testimony last night.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Perfect. That's great. So we'll be reaching out to try to figure out a way to accommodate the language change with -- with what DMV more broadly is trying to do?

ERIN McCLEARY: Yes, it was specifically section 10 1436b which is new language, and 14 3060, which has been the modified language.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you Erin. Are there any questions? Seeing none, thank you for joining us today. And thank you for your submitted testimony and we'll be in touch.

ERIN McCLEARY: All right. Thank you so much.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): We have Curt Leng, followed by Ellen Cupo. Is Curt not in?

PHILIP MAINIERO: Unfortunately, we did not see either Curt or Ellen in waiting room at the moment.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): If you don't have a Cierra Patrick, William Kaplan, Hertling Ellen Cupo, we will be waiting for them in the waiting room. If the clerk recognizes they come in at any point in time, they will be moved to the front of the list and be able to testify when they do come in before this hearing closes. Next is Alec Slatky to be followed by Sara Bronin.

PHILIP MAINIERO: Alec is in the room and now Cierra has been added too, so you can go right to back to them.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Terrific. Alec, you're before the Committee to be followed by Cierra by Sara Bronin.

ALEC SLATKY: All right, great. Thank you, Chairman Lemar, other Ranking Members, Vice Chairs, other members of the Committee, and of course, the staff that's keeping this running. My name is Alec

Slatky, I am the Director of Public and Government Affairs for AAA Northeast. I'm also here to testify on behalf of the other AAA club in Connecticut, the triple A Allied Group.

Together, we serve over a million members in the state of Connecticut. And I first want to thank DoT, NDMV for the thoughtful Bills that are on the agenda today, particularly DoT's emphasis on pedestrian safety, both in the Bill and in the plan they released yesterday, I think I get my brownie points for that. And the Division Zero Council proposal, which is also a good one and to Representative Devlin's point earlier about education about some of these new laws, we'd be happy to educate our membership about some of the common sense laws like the dooring provision, the clarification of crosswalk yielding, should they be enacted. So happy to do that?

I did want to comment specifically on speed camera enforcement. AAA recognizes that speed cameras certainly can help to keep the roads safer. And accordingly we support speed camera programs that are supplemented with engineering and educational measures, traditional law enforcement and that are thoroughly evaluated. But we also know that they can be abused. We've -- I've worked in I had worked in New York for four years for AAA before I came up to Connecticut, and I've seen both in New York City, they have a program that's part of a big Vision Zero plan. Whereas in Nassau County, they had a program that -- for school zones that flamed out after six months. So I have a little bit of an unhealthy obsession with automated enforcement. And I would be happy to work with any municipalities as well as the legislators on clarifying some of the language for some of the things that I'm talking about not to sound presumptuous, but some of the recommendations that AAA has, related to automated speed enforcement to make sure that the program is focused on safety, not on revenue. Would include a warning period, to enhance public awareness of the program, reinvesting

the revenue back into traffic safety, so that it's, you know, truly a safety measure 100%.

Making sure that we consider crash data when we're looking at selecting the sites. Also making sure there's a public education component, especially from the municipalities. I know there's a public education component for the Work Zone Safety Camera program, and also doing an annual evaluation. There's evaluation of adherence to privacy regulations in here. But I'd like to see an evaluation of safety. So including before and after crash data, violation, data, adjudication data, and revenue data. I think all those are appropriate. And that was my own internal timer going off. But I did -- so happy to work with legislators on automated enforcement. And I did want to briefly comment on online driver education. We appreciate DMV making it more accessible, especially during COVID, allowing virtual driver education. And we're glad that they're making that program potentially permanent in the Bill. We've received very positive feedback from -- from parents and from students. And we also offer an E-module that's engaging and we'd be happy to see that authorized either via legislative language or regulatory language so we can keep access the driver education to everyone, even students who schedules might not permit it, and ensure that they take driver education before aging out of GDL. And happy to answer any questions.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you out for your testimony today. We're happy to have AAA, we look forward to working with you if we are able to develop some of these programs to make sure as you said, and we get a robust program that is focused on safety first. It's been my goal to try and ensure that any revenues collected from these payback program, but also are reinvested into complete street programs. I think that will be the local implementation process, not necessary state legislation. But how the localities who wish to be part of the pilot program would reallocate those funds, doing it in

the state statutes is a little harder, but making that a condition of the pilot program is probably the appropriate way to go. I'll certainly reach out to you and look forward to hearing your thoughts on those ideas. Representative Carney.

REP. CARNEY (23RD): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Alec, for your testimony and your expertise on traffic enforcement cameras, I do not share that same level of expertise. So I appreciate that. I just -- I have a couple of questions related to your written testimony. The first one is you mentioned in Nassau County, that school zone cameras were put up and then removed six months later, because the public felt it was just a way to generate revenue and not to actually keep people safe. So in my research, I have seen other municipalities put up speed cameras or traffic enforcement cameras, and then remove them. Are there any other reasons besides that are any sort of roadblocks we could hit? That may be something similar to this that you've seen in other areas of the country?

ALEC SLATSKY: I think -- honestly, I really think that the perception that it's a revenue generator, or, as I think we've heard Mayor Elicker say earlier that it is inequitably enforced, and that cameras are inequitably distributed, I think those are probably the two biggest roadblocks. There are always, you know, technical issues about -- in a particular location, right, there might be very conducive, I guess, to speeding.

And the -- and the road might be built far too widely in a way that induces drivers to speed I think we heard from Jim Travers mentioned things like that earlier. So I think, you know, when you get to site specific things, those issues can come up. But I think really combating the perception that this is just a way to make money, and making sure that you you're not just putting up the cameras, that you also are taking a look at the road

and saying, what else can I do to make this road safe? What other engineering enhancements can I do here? So I think those are really the big, big issues.

REP. CARNEY (23RD): I appreciate that. And my other question is, you know, another criticism that comes up a lot regarding traffic enforcement cameras is privacy, particularly from groups like the ACLU. So one of the -- one of the things you talked about in your testimony that I have not, you know, I don't think I've heard of yet is, instead of just having a camera, take a picture of a license plate, you would actually have video recordings. So I'm just wondering how you would get a video recording of a violation that wouldn't necessarily infringe on somebody's privacy, or just, you know, take a picture of the vehicle without getting the person's image in that video?

ALEC SLATSKY: Sure. So I can only -- I don't want to speak, you know, for the camera companies necessarily, I can only go based on some of the violations I've seen when I worked in New York, I would get calls very frequently from members who were upset about getting a speed camera ticket and basically didn't buy it.

And there's usually an online portal where you can enter your ticket number, you can go in and take a look at the evidence that they have, which is usually multiple photographs that are time stamped to the 10th or 100th of a second. So you can basically calculate the speed in between. And sometimes they did include a video. And that was usually the most compelling evidence that tell the driver Hey, if you look at his video, you were speeding. In terms of how that would impact privacy, obviously, I think it's appropriate to have very stringent privacy regulations, which I think are here on the Bill. I'm just not sure -- I don't know of other programs that would allow you to take a picture only of the license plate and have nothing

else in the surrounding if such things exist, you know, I'm open to learning about them. That's just been my experience. So I wanted to let the Committee know that.

REP. CARNEY (2ND): Okay, I appreciate that. And I'm sure we'll have additional conversations at the legislative session. So thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Great, thank you, Alec, for your time today. Are there any other questions? Seeing none, great to see.

ALEC SLATSKY: Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Next up is Sara Bronin to be followed by Alex Hauptli. Ms. Bronin you're on. Good to see you today.

SARA BRONON: Nice to see you. Thank you Chair Lemar, Ranking Members, Somers and Carney, Vice Chairs, Cassano and Sims, and, you know, you have my written testimony and I know you've had a very long day with a lot of great comments and speakers giving you statistics about why this Bill, House Bill 5429 is so important.

I'm testifying in favor of it as a resident of Hartford, which is a community where a large percentage of our households don't have access to cars. And yet, as I say, in my testimony bear the burden of not only road violence, but also vehicle-related emissions. I think taken together, all of the proposals in this Bill will really help to encourage a shift in our mindset towards alternatives to cars, and to the extent that we do use cars will help to make our roadways safer. I recently wrote an article called Rules of the Road, the Struggle for Safety and the Unmet Promise of Federalism. About how state and local governments often don't have enough power to do what they need to do to make our roads safer.

This Bill works within the power that states do have. And it also enables and empowers local governments to make decisions that they are not able -- they weren't -- they're not able to make now. Here in Hartford, we've been hoping to reduce speed limits, for example, for some time, and also to experiment with some of the things that are being supported in this Bill, through funding and other means. So again, it -- you know, from a mostly a land use person, mostly a zoning person as you may know, because you've maybe seen me testify before in other things, but -- but land use and transportation are intricately related.

And I do think that the proposals in this Bill will really help to address a lot of issues. I did mention in my testimony that I would be very supportive of this Committee in some future iteration of this Bill, or maybe some future Bill to look at a transition as California has done from a level of service standard to a vehicle mile standard, we have some information about that, actually desegregate Connecticut website. But essentially, what it means is that decisions on new development would relate to the amount of vehicle trips generated, as opposed to a level of service calculation, which relates to the inconvenience to drivers.

So I would suggest, you know, continuing to explore that as a line of inquiry and maybe moving more toward the California approach. Because until we really start to internalize and mitigate the costs of our -- the way that we locate things, and the vehicle miles that are generated by those -- by those things, you're really not going to be able to move forward to a cleaner -- cleaner economy and cleaner society. So I'll just leave it there. I commend everybody who was involved in drafting this legislation in the eyes to fully support it.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you for your testimony today. And I think you highlight an issue that are

only briefly explored, we've referenced a little bit how the state traffic commission would evaluate large projects for their impact on intermodal transportation options beyond the number of traffic, cars it generates.

We're struggling with how to do this, I'll look at the California model that may be illustrative of a path forward for us, and how we evaluate large projects or small projects even for their overall impact on the surrounding community. I think it's correct to point out that appropriate and responsible land use planning comes down to transportation planning as well. And I'm very thankful for your efforts on all respects over the last few years, and I look forward to seeing you before the Planning and Development Committee as well as a number of other issues that we care about. Thank you for your time today. Are there any questions for Sara? Seeing none, thank you for your time.

SARA BRONIN: Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Yeah, Alex Hauptli. And Alex if I mispronounce your name, I am apologetic for that. You can certainly correct me. To be found by Melissa Riley.

PHILIP MAINIERO: Unfortunately, Alex is not in the waiting room yet. I do not see Melissa Riley here either. Just give me one moment. I do not see Riley in the waiting room. You might have to go to Bill O'Neill.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): So we have Alex Hauptli, followed by Melissa Riley. Neither of them are currently in the waiting room. James Forman to be called by Bill O'Neill.

PHILIP MAINIERO: And James is not in the waiting room. So we have moved right to Bill O'Neill and

added James and the others to the list to be watched for.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): We have Bill O'Neil followed by Aris Stalis. And we'll have a list continuing to populate with those who may have missed their testimony window. And we will repeatedly inform them of their opportunity to testify before the Committee even if they missed their window or had technological constraints.

PHILIP MAINIERO: And Mr. Chair, it looks like Judge Beverly Streit-Kafeel This was registered by Melissa Riley she is here waiting now we can admit her.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Excellent.

PHILIP MAINIERO: Judge should be in the room now.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Perfect. Judge, are you able to turn on your -- there we are. I see you. Thank you so much for joining us today.

JUDGE STREIT-KEFALAS: Thank you, and not a bad job on pronunciation. I am Beverly Streit-Kefalas and the Probate Court Administrator for the State of Connecticut. Thank you Chair, Representative Lamar, Senator Somers, Representative Carney, Vice-chair Cassano, and Simmons as well as members of the Transportation Committee.

My testimony this afternoon is limited to raise Bill 261 Section 4 only. And what I wish to share in addition to my written testimony that was already submitted is to highlight that the proposed change to Connecticut general statutes section 14-16. Subsection B to expand the timeline from 60 days to 120 days will conflict with current statutory provisions under Connecticut Probate laws.

We are certainly in support of the current statutory provisions that allows for a non-probate transfer of a motor vehicle to a designated beneficiary within

60 days of the owners death. But I do oppose the expansion to 120 days as noted. Right now there are under Connecticut general statutes in the probate title are two probate processes whereby title to a solely owned motor vehicle can be transferred and both of those processes reflect leaving the opportunity for a designated beneficiary to exercise this opportunity as a -- under the 60 days.

If it were expanded what will be the end result is not only clear confusion on the part of a beneficiary who's designated and family members who are seeking to probate solely owned motor vehicles, but it will definitely lead to legal disputes over ownership of the title to that motor vehicle. After that 60 day window of time under typical probate court processes, either in a smallest state scenario, the court may have at that juncture, issued a decree authorizing the title of that motor vehicle.

And even in a full probate estate, that same timeline would have triggered the appointment of a fiduciary who would then be authorized to do the same, to either transfer or sell that motor vehicle. The expansion in 14 -- sorry, 1416. Subsection B as proposed in Section 4 of Raise Bill 261 would mean that there could be conflicting title transfers and disputes over that title. So for those reasons -- it has more details in my written testimony, I oppose Section 4 of Raised Bill 261. And I thank you for your consideration.

REP. LEMAR (96<sup>TH</sup>): Thank you very much. And I appreciate the highlight of the specific sections and the ability for us to understand concretely where the concern lies. I plan on reaching out to our Commissioner for Motor Vehicles and attempting to see if there's a way that we can modify this language to address your concerns and if not work with them, or work with you to see what we can do to improve the equity of the program itself. So I

appreciate your time today and your attention to this issue.

JUDGE STREIT-KEFALAS: Thank you. I look forward to the opportunity to work with you and the Commissioner.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Are there any questions? Seeing none, thank you so much.

JUDGE STREIT-KEFALAS: Thanks, have a great day.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): We James Forman to be followed by Bill O'Neill and Aris Stalis. And again, there is a list of people who may have missed me calling them during their original scheduled window. We have that list available to us and if people come into the waiting room we will call them at that time. And if anyone's ever wondering if the highlight is, you know, of being a legislator is running a Zoom Public Hearing with 75 Public Hearing testimonial scheduled it is not this is not an easy process. But I am very thankful to Clerk Mainiero, who is handling this with great aplomb and making sure things are running speedily, and safely. So I appreciate everyone's time and patient.

PHILIP MAINIERO: Representative Lemar, It seems we are not able to locate James foreman but Mr. William O'Neal is in the chat. Mr. O'Neill if you could unmute and turn on your camera please.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you Mr. O'Neill. Senator Cassano? I think I saw you raise your hand for a second there. You are muted senator Cassano, I apologize.

SENATOR CASSANO (4TH): That is you, not me.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): I'm about to turn it over to you or Representative Carney there. Mr. O'Neill Are you able to turn on your camera for us? Mr. O'Neill you are now unmuted and before the Transportation

Committee. If you would like you could turn on your camera. But if you're not comfortable with then you're more than welcome to testify audio.

BILL O'NEILL: Greetings, thank you for allowing me to attend this incredible process. Co-chairs members of the Transportation Committee. I'd like to speak specifically to Section 15. The License Plate reinstatement. Thank you for reaching back and redirecting this revenue stream back to Greenway projects. Once this is effective, we will roll out a license plate promotion. The increased revenue will help Greenways. We includes my membership on the Connecticut Greenways Council DEEP, former chair, also national member of the East Coast Greenway Alliance and current Advisory Committee person. I'm retired from the engineering firm of Fuss & O'Neill.

Beyond the license plate Section 15. This Bill contains important items to protect the Bike-Ped community. The increased Bike-Ped fatalities and injuries are overwhelming. If we were to move Bike-Ped users to separated Greenways as DoT and DEEP have done to protect that community and broaden the usership some of the older users, some of the less-skilled will feel more comfortable and certainly be better served on a separated path.

So the revenue from this small effort will go towards that kind of a project. Move the user into a safe community. I like to read from a letter submitted by a fellow Greenway Council person Gwen Marion. She wrote "I am writing to the Transportation Committee in support of Section 15 which reinstates the Greenways Commemorative License Plate program. When I purchased my Greenways License Plate in the early 2000s. I did so knowing some of the fee would support Greenways projects. That program was discontinued. Reinstating the program creates an easy way to direct funds into an account that would be used to enhance public awareness of provide funding for state and local

efforts to preserve restore, and protected greenways."

Those words were taken from your bill and wonderfully stated. So we are excited about that. We are looking forward to a change and more eloquently way, you will hear from speaker 39 and 66 support for the license plate. So we're excited about that and as Roy Rogers said in the early 1940s and 50s, before many of you were born, happy Trails. And Senator Cassano is that Bobby yours jacket up there behind you, a friend of mine. Thank you for your time.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Mr. O'Neill, for your testimony for your commitment to bike trails. And - - and, frankly, for your long standing thoughts and ideas about how to best preserve and protect our bikeways and greenways in the state of Connecticut. I appreciate your testimony today and for you joining us today on our first Zoom Public Hearing of the 2021 legislative session. I appreciate it.

BILL O'NEILL: I have had the advantage of using a prior Governor's name.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): I have a first name of a prior governor that people don't necessarily confuse me with so it works out okay, sometimes. Are there any questions for Mr. O'Neill? Senator Cassano?

SENATOR CASSANO (4TH): Yes. I just want to thank Bill O'Neil for his years of service in this whole area. I was the Mayor in the 1970s it was Bill O'Neil who talked me into the one of the first bike trails and all of Connecticut. Hartford Road project and we've just done nothing but experience since then, and provided safe -- safe access for cyclists. And, Bill, thank you on behalf of all those people who've been benefited from it. Thank you.

BILL O'NEILL: Senator, as they say there are talkers and doers. I'm a talker and thank you for doing it.

SENATOR CASSANO (4TH): You're welcome.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Seeing no other questions thank you for your time this afternoon.

BILL O'NEILL: My pleasure.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): We have `next, Aris Stalis followed by Brandon Dufour.

PHILIP MAINIERO: Brandon should be in the room now. Brandon, if you want to unmute yourself and turn the camera on.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Brandon for joining us today. You are live before the Transportation Committee. Thank you for joining us.

BRANDON DUFOUR: I've submitted some written testimony which I'll read now and be happy to answer your questions after. Thank you for the opportunity to testify publicly during these challenging times. We appreciate your nimbleness to make these hearings available virtually.

My name is Brandon Dufour. I'm the founder and CEO at the Next Street. We are a driving school that operates in 37 Connecticut cities and towns. We teach more than 20,000 new drivers per year in Connecticut, representing more than 65% of the new driver marketplace in the state. COVID-19 has presented our industry and specifically our company with an ongoing list of challenges. We are proud of how we've handled these challenges and especially proud of our team that continues to make getting a license in Connecticut a priority despite the pandemic challenges.

Each day nearly 100 licensed driving instructors are teaching new teen drivers in person in our cars with masks on and windows rolled down, ample disinfected on hand and navigating it all. It isn't perfect. It's not even preferred, but it's what we must do to get driver's license into the hands of new teen drivers across the state. The DMV has temporarily allowed our classroom sessions to be taught virtually, this has been a silver lining for our industry.

The DMV has included language in Senate Bill 261 to make virtual classroom learning a permanent solution. And I'm here to speak in support of that proposal. We are seeing an increased number of students opting into our 30 hour program because of the convenient access to virtual classes. We have lost and in fact probably have gained education. We've lost no education quality in the virtual medium, and we hear only compliments and praise from our staff and customers.

We do recommend some clarity for driving schools. A few items that I would like to just recommend quickly is that classes must be taught by a live instructor that is teaching from within the state of Connecticut, we never want to see pre-recorded lectures or online learning modules that would drastically reduce the quality of education. Currently, students must take a quiz at the end of the classroom sessions to assess their understanding of the material.

We believe this quiz should be law with clear and outstanding penalties for driving schools that do not offer quizzes or do not require passing grades before completing their students. We would like clarity on what to do with current regulations that require our classroom locations to be licensed by the DMV.

We need the language to be clarified as to where batch of virtual classrooms can be taught from most

of our instructors are currently broadcasting out of their homes. Driving schools should be required to teach both classroom training and practical driving lessons. There is a major correlation between the theory that we teach in class and the practical skills taught behind the wheel. Schools teaching only classroom sessions can be a disservice to the students. I respectfully submit this testimony and available to answer any questions or brainstorm other needed solutions together, traffic safety leaders in the state including many members of this committee, have made major strides in protecting our new teen drivers. Let's continue to make Connecticut's roadways among the safest in the country for new teen drivers. Thanks so much.

REP. LEAMR (69TH): Thank you, Brandon, for your testimony, both here today and written that helps us illustrate some of the concerns that you have in operating these schools that have done really tremendous work, working with our DMV to accommodate the so many students who are newly eligible to drive who, if we weren't nimble, and if we weren't willing to adapt our policies and procedures, you would have wasted nine months that had an incredible backlog of new drivers who are hoping to receive their licenses and get on the road. And I thank you for your work. I know it wasn't easy to come up with irrelevant programs and -- and operations on your end. And I know that you help DMV understand ways that they could improve on their end. So we'll certainly be looking at your testimony and trying to accommodate it. Thank you for the question. Representative Zupkus.

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH): Hi, thank you, Mr. Chair. Hi, Brandon in the first off, just say I would never want to be in your business because teaching my daughter how to drive was brutal. But with that being said, I've heard from people that they have there's a backlog on due to the pandemic. And could you just talk about that? I know. Our chair just mentioned that but I've had people reach out to me

saying that it has taken so much time for them to get their license and having trouble actually. So could you speak to that please?

BRANDON DUFOUR: Thank you for the question. So we closed basically industry-wide in March and license testing stopped beginning on about March 15. And it remained closed through the end of June. That creates about a three month backlog in our business. It's not like a restaurant. If you don't go out to dinner on Tuesday night, you just don't go out to dinner. If you don't go get your driver's license on Tuesday, you still need to go for that test on Wednesday.

And so that three month closure created a three month volume of students that when we reopened in June -- we and the DMV reopened in June. There were close to 10,000 students now that didn't go for a license test that needed to and so basically what we, in collaboration with the DMV have been trying to do is to create more supply to handle that demand.

And unfortunately, due to the staffing issues at DMV and their inability to re hire, there just aren't enough inspectors to catch up on the demand. So today, we are still experiencing an eight to 12 week wait for a license test. So new teen driver that logs on today is likely booking something in late March to late April. And we're trying hard to work with the DMV to come up with some solutions to solve that problem. But they are they're handcuffed by their staffing shortages.

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH): Right, thank you. Because I know it's a problem. I've had people, like I said, reach out to me, and it's months. And so I was just curious where that stands now. Thank you.

BRANDON DUFOUR: I think I'll add is, there's two types of license tests, the driving schools have an offsite program where the DMV actually comes to our

locations, that program is three times more efficient than licensed testing that happens at the branches. And so we do think by increasing the volume of licensed tests that happen at the driving schools, we could test two to three times more people than they're doing at the branches currently. So we are trying to get them to allocate more of those branch resources to the driving schools to be able to catch up on this backlog.

REP. LEMAR (69TH) Thank you, Representative Zupkus, thank you Brandon. Representative Harrison.

REP. HARRISON (69TH): Thank you for all that you're doing here. And I appreciate you coming up with a different model. It's always good. My question is, have you tracked the pass rate of the old pre -- pre COVID as well as what's going on with your new model, I'd be interested to know what the success is.

BRANDON DUFOUR: I know measure of success is the road test. And we measure that only for our students that are able to test at our driving school. Our passing percentage actually increased. So pre -COVID, we boasted about an 89 to 90% pass rate first time, so a student that tests in the first time about 80 to 90% of them were passing on that first try, that's actually gone up to 93 to 94%. In the in the post-COVID era here with virtual learning. So our pass rate has increased. That's the practical driving test. So something's working.

REP. HARRISON (69TH): Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH) Thank you, Representative Harrison. Thank you, Brandon for your time today and we'll be in touch to try and work out some of the details of your suggestions about moving forward with DMV suggestions. Thanks. We have a long list of folks who missed their original call. The clerk is continuing to monitor the waiting room to ensure that those people, if they do come in late, have an

opportunity to testify before the committee. Next on our list is number 32. Carl Chisem, followed by Kate Rosen. Now and you are prior to number 32. But just identify yourself to the clerk, and we'll make sure we get you in. Next Carl Chisem, followed by Kate Rosen.

PHILIP MIANIERO, CLERK: And Carl should be in the Public Hearing. Now Carl if you could take yourself off mute and turn your camera on please.

CARL CHISEM: Thank you. I got knocked off there for a minute. Good afternoon, Senator Cassano, Representative Lemar and Distinguished Members of the Transportation Committee. My name is Carl Chisem, I am the President of the Connecticut Employees Union Independent, that CEIU Local 511. We represent over 3600 state workers. Approximately 1500 of those workers are transportation maintainers employed by the Connecticut Department of Transportation. These maintainers plow roads, state roads and perform critical highway, repair, and maintenance work on our state. They are proud workers and provide quality public services to the citizens of Connecticut.

I am here today to testify in support of House Bill 5429. AN ACT CONCERNING PEDESTRIAN SAFETY VISION ZERO COUNCIL SPEED LIMITS IN MUNICIPALITIES, FINES AND CHARGES FOR CERTAIN VIOLATIONS TO GREENWAYS COMMEMORATIVE ACCOUNT AND MAINTENANCE WORK ZONES AND SCHOOL ZONE SAFETY ENFORCEMENT, specifically Section 16 through 20. The men and women who work for the Connecticut Department of Transportation as transportation maintainers are in constant danger of being injured or killed by motor vehicles and our maintenance work zones. And it's just the workers who are in in danger but motorists are also at risk of serious injury.

And death as well. Between January 1st, 2017 and December 3rd, 2020. There were 4029 crashes in Connecticut work zones. Of that number there were

17 fatalities, and 1188 injuries. These numbers do not indicate the number of motorists who drive recklessly through work zones without incident are mainly our member's witness. These are close calls daily, and their lives are in constant risk while doing their jobs. Motorists are who drunk continuing to drive distracted and work recklessly. They ignore the laws and put people's lives in danger while out in the road. With the reduced police presence throughout the state and maintenance work zones.

Motorists feel they have free rein to disregard posted speed limits and signage, putting -- putting workers -- putting the workers lives and their own lives in jeopardy. I thank the members of the Transportation Committee for working with our members over the last 10 years to improve work zone safety. We have made progress through the tougher fines and penalties for those who endanger, injure, or kill a worker in the work zone.

Unfortunately, we must do more. Several states including Illinois, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Washington have all implemented automated speed enforcement and work zones. Our members feel the urgency to implementing a similar model in Connecticut to deter motorists from driving recklessly through work zones. We want to work with all stakeholders to develop a program in Connecticut that has immediate impact, changes behavior, and improves safety for motorists and their workers to make -- who make our roads and bridge safe for travel.

These workers are not just statistics, they are mothers, fathers, sisters, and brothers. Their families depend on them and expect them to come home safe at the end of each work day. It is our duty and responsibility to protect them and help make our roads safer to travel for everyone. I ask the members of this committee to please support House Bill 5429 we cannot go another year ignoring the

safety of our workers. In regard to Senate Bill 261.

And that concerning recommendations for the Department of Motor Vehicles, CEIU, opposes the Bill pacifically lines 737 through 760. THE COMMISSIONER MAY COLLABORATE OR ENTER INTO AGREEMENTS WITH SUCH CONTRACTORS, MUNICIPALITIES TO IMPLEMENT TECHNOLOGICALLY SOLUTIONS, AND OTHER IMPROVEMENTS TO REDUCE CUSTOMER WAIT TIMES TO ENHANCE CUSTOMER CONVENIENCE. The language is too far broad, providing Commissioner the opportunity to outsource jobs that our workers can, and should perform. The lines removed the General Assembly and really the public at large from any meaningful oversight role and functioning our state DMVs. I urge you to review this language and consider that outsourcing and privatization do not always deliver savings or efficient services. Thank you for your time and consideration.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Carl, for your testimony, your willingness to come before the Committee for multiple years now, on issues regarding the protection and safety of our highway workers who are in a very specific and vulnerable place are so much of their daily work lives. I had an opportunity to meet with people at a district facility about a year and a half ago with you and with so many of our employees who told me the repeat challenges that they face and the repeat events that they face on their daily work just replacing guardrails and how people's traveling by at 70 miles an hour without care or regard for their safety.

The number of near misses that people have experienced and the number of friends and loved ones that they lost. Because people are not careful or not thoughtful about how they engage their vehicles traveling at extraordinary speeds, past people just doing their jobs on behalf of the State of Connecticut. I know you feel this personally with people that you've lost. And I know that for many

of your workers, it is a constant fear that they take home with them on a nightly basis. And it's certainly an obligation of us as legislators to try and find ways to protect those workers who are doing state business.

CARL CHISEM: And they certainly appreciate that representative Lemar, when you came down, I think at that time, when you were there, there was one individual who just only worked there six months and out in six months, he's gotten hit six times.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): And I know when we looked at the idea of piloting this type of technology, we didn't just randomly come up with it. We looked at other states, we looked at places like Maryland and Pennsylvania and other states that have looked at this technology and have dramatic positive impacts on the safety of their workforce. And I think that is the model that we're looking for.

We're not looking to generate extraordinary amounts of money into the special transportation fund. This is about worker safety. And in fact, communities that have implemented this technology, it only generates revenue for like a year and a half, two years, because the real goal is accomplished. People start paying attention to the speed limits in those areas. And they know that they're going to get hit with a ticket if they choose to -- to drive 90 miles an hour while someone's replacing a pothole or replacing a guardrail.

And I commend you on your thoughtfulness on this and knowing that you get some opposition. It's been a long road last couple of years. But I appreciate you coming before us. And on behalf of the entire Transportation Committee, thank you, to you and to all of your members for their tireless work.

CARL CHISEM: Well, we thank you for that.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): With respect to your testimony on the DMV, though, with concern about privatization of some services, we've had a conversation with the DMV, and I think they recognize the concern that so many of their members have about what that language opens the door to. They've made it clear to me that they're willing to sit down with myself and you and many others to narrowly craft that language. And so we have a greater understanding of what it is that they're looking for, and that it does not in fact, establish a precedent or open for mass privatization that will be something we will work on closely together.

CARL CHISEM: That would be great.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Are there any questions for Carl? Seeing none, thank you so much for your testimony today.

CARL CHISEM: Thank you, everyone.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Next up, we have Kate Rozen, followed by Michelle Huggins. And again, for anyone who's coming in now, we are up to number 33 on our list, if you missed your time earlier, so identify yourself or our Clerk and we will get you in the queue for the meeting, Kate Feel free to unmute yourself to begin.

KATE ROZEN: Good afternoon Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member Somers, and Carney. Vice chairs, Cassano and Simms and members of the Transportation Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I have also submitted testimony.

My name is Kate Rozen. I am a Woodbridge resident and I am testifying to communicate my strong support of Connecticut House Bill 5429. On Friday, October 16, 2020, I was biking from work in downtown New Haven to my home in Woodbridge, Connecticut.

Just before 5pm a woman driving while on her cell phone passed me at a distance that would have allowed my barely outstretched arm to touch her vehicle had I so much as flinched in my riding and moved over in the lane that I had the right of way to I might not be speaking to you today. I was able to catch up with her at the next light one of the many perks of riding an electric bicycle and based on the shock on her face when I arrived at her passenger side window to let her know that she has to be more careful in the future. Her previous actions which in a split second could have altered my life had not even registered in her awareness, likely because her attention was engaged in conversation she was having on her cell phone and not on the road.

My parents are watching this from their home and they're hearing the story for the first time today. They are supportive of biking and are bikers themselves but no anytime any of us put on a helmet and go out where there's risk. I'm sure there are many of you who bike and I know my parents wish that sometimes I would just take the car instead. But I fully expect I'll get a text message from them for this is over. As scary as it is sometimes to be a bike commuter. I still ride, I commuted to work yesterday by bike heading home just as the snow started to fall pausing briefly to see the ducks and geese in the Edgewood Park pond.

Those moments are small gifts I get because I'm not in a car. I'm a relentless optimist, and I see this Bill as a toolkit of measures to make our roads safer, which will in turn allow more people to move around their communities as pedestrians and bikers. This is a noble and worthy goal that starts with your support of House Bill 5429. And I urge you to favorably vote the Bill out of the committee. Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Kate, for your testimony for your long standing advocacy on these

issues, both traffic safety and bikes in greenways. I know I've seen you had a few prior conferences on these issues at the Capitol back when we were allowed to be in person. So thank you for joining us on the Zoom version of it this year, and lending your personal story and your testimony today. I really appreciate it. Representative McCarthy Vahey. Don't go anywhere, we have a question for you.

REP. McCARTHY VAHEY (133RD): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Kate, for sharing your story here with us. It's people like you and those stories that I think really have an impact on us. And just to make sure I heard you correctly, you said you were on an electric bicycle. Am I correct?

KATE ROZEN: That is correct.

SREP. McCARTHY VAHEY (133RD): And just curious, can you give us a sense of the range in costs for electric bicycles?

KATE ROZEN: Absolutely. Battery technology has come a long way. And so depending on how much pedal assist you use, you can get up to 40 miles per charge. And electric bicycles start, you know, in under \$1,000, for sure, I in particular ride and electric cargo bikes, so I can move myself and my child around. And those start usually around \$1200 with financing available.

REP. McCARTHY VAHEY (133RD): Thank you for that. And I appreciate you use it to commute to and from work. So it's how you get to work?

KATE ROZEN: Correct?

REP. McCARTHY VAHEY (133RD): Right. Yeah. And I point that out just because it's a much more cost effective option and available for so many more people. And even though it's an electric bicycle, and you have pedal assist and can move at a higher

rate of speed, you still remain a vulnerable user on the roadway, the situation that you described the other day in terms of being able to reach out. We have -- we had -- the first person testifying today, Sarah Roy, who rides her bicycle around town with a pool noodle out of the back of her bicycle so that cars have a sense of the kind of space.

And I'll just share with you two that my own husband is a big bicyclist for fun, I used to be a bicycle commuter myself. And in the 5000 miles that he rode last year, there were -- I couldn't even begin to count the number of times that he came back and shared stories like that with me. Every time he leaves, I say goodbye in a very specific kind of way. So we shouldn't have to worry when people like you are riding your bicycle to work or if people are out for exercise or children or out for play, that they're going to be put in that position. So thank you very much for being with us today.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Kim. And I thank you for highlighting the electric bicycle usage as well. If you -- I'm sure you remember, that was a fight we had having this Committee it took a couple of years before people understood the technology and open the door for allowing e-bikes on Connecticut roads. It was badly one of those times it could have led but it took us a little bit too long to get moving. And we actually lost that bike manufacturer who wanted to be in Connecticut, manufacturing e-bikes but we're upset that it took us so long to be able to stick realistic traffic transit options.

But frankly, we finally got there with support like yours you testified in the past on those issues. And I'm glad to see you out here. Next up we have Zak Leavy followed by Douglas Noble. Mr. Clerk I got a note from Michelle Huggins -- Huggins saying she did not wish to testify. I just wanted to make sure we recognize that by passing her next up is Zac Leavy followed by Douglas Noble.

ZAK LEAVY: Good afternoon Chairman Lamar, members of the transportation Committee. My name is Zac Leavy and I serve as a legislative and political coordinator for AFSCME Council 4, a union representing nearly 30,000 public and private employees across Connecticut.

We also represent Rank and File employees from the Department of Motor Vehicles, who could be negatively impacted by Section 13 of the proposed Bill. Section 13 of Senate Bill 261 would broadly expand the Commissioners ability to enter into agreements with private contractors in municipalities.

This would allow them to enter into these agreements without going through the legislature or Contracting Standards Board. Council 4 strongly rejects privatizing work being performed by our members or any employees in the DMV.

The Department of Motor Vehicles was impacted in recent years due to privatizing the computer system with 3M rather than using state employees. If this could have been completed and maintained by state employees, it could have helped avoid the longer -- the resulting longer wait times. The DMV is Also a significant revenue driver for the state and further privatization in this department could impact this revenue stream during a time and we need to preserve as much revenue as possible.

Earlier today, the Commissioner described the sections intent in much narrower returns than is currently written and Council 4 strongly urges the Committee to remove the this section of the Bill. Thank you, and I'm happy to answer any questions.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Zac, for your testimony, and coming here on behalf of so many of our employees here in the state of Connecticut. And indicating those concerns, I think, the conversations I've had with DMV, were reflected

well, and how they presented what they were looking for in that section. I think it's important for us to work together to ensure that their intent is what we actually pass in statute, so that we're not opening a large door where a very -- very -- very narrow window is envisioned. Thank you for your testimony. Are there are questions for Mr. Leavy? Seeing none, thank you so much for your testimony.

ZAC LEAVY: Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Next up, we have Douglas Noble to be followed by a Tasha Cusson.

DOUGLAS NOBLE: Hello, everybody, how are you doing today? Thanks for being on this call. I just want to hit on a couple quick points. I'm on the Traffic & Safety Committee for the Yale University, we've worked very diligently with New Haven trying to look at different intersections, red light, running, speeding, and it's been a major problem.

I'm also on the Board for Back to Trails Association. So a big proponent of bike safety, and actually to teach a bike class at Yale. What I see walking around campus, since I'm all over, pretty much every day is a catastrophe. I see cyclists that don't know where they're going. I see cars, running lights. And it's just a big problem. I think what we really need to focus on is a mixture of engineering of high profile intersections like South Frontage, which was mentioned earlier today. Also, I think it's really important to get the education factor out there for people we have -- people come from all over the world to the University, so some people have no idea about bike laws.

You know, 27 years ago, when I took my driver's license, I think I may have seen one or two questions on bike safety. I don't even know that's even offered anymore in the DMV's training website. So that's something I'd like to see put forward. So

it makes sure of engineering controls on intersections. And also for speeding in regards to that, I will -- different cities I've been through, they have time lights.

So I see a lot of times in New Haven people floor at this lane because they know if they make if they get up to 40 miles an hour, they'll be able to get to the next light, and then be hit the next four or five green lights going through downtown. If we have time lights that basically go at 25 miles an hour. And if you do that speed, you'll make all the green lights. So investing in the infrastructure is really important. I think that we'll do a great service to New Haven and pedestrian traffic, you know, with raised intersections and, and redoing bike lanes, so on and so forth. That's pretty much all I had today. I appreciate everybody being on this call. And are there any questions?

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you for your testimony today, And for your commitment to working with the university and city of New Haven and on the bike to trail work that you've done in the past. I know we've -- we've run into each other a few times on campus. You've never been shy about lending your opinion to me. And I agree with you even when we disagree. But I greatly appreciate it. And I greatly appreciate you spending your time here with us today. Are there any questions for Mr. Noble? Seeing none, thank you so much. Next up, we have Tasha Cusson. Followed Annie Hemingway. Hemingway. I don't see Tasha in but I do see R. Solace

TAHSA CUSSON: I'm actually -- I'm Tasha Cusson.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Okay. So Tasha Cusson followed by R. Solace and then Annie Hemingway.

TASHA CUSSON: So, thank you for having me, Senator Cassano, Representative Lamar, Senator Somers, Representative Carney, and members of the Transportation Committee. My name is Tasha Cusson

I'm the Chairman of the Connecticut Marine Trades Association, the CMTA which represents nearly 350 member marine or boating related businesses and their employees, urges your support of Section 32 of Senate Bill 261.

The Department of Motor Vehicle Bill which authorizes marine dealers to issue permit boat registrations and decals. Currently, marine dealers may only issue temporary registrations requiring the customer to come to DMV for a permanent registration. The Department of Motor Vehicle has been making a number of changes to streamline their operations in order to provide a better customer experience for Connecticut citizens. Passage of this Provision, section 32 of Senate Bill 261, will be one more improvement that will benefit the agency and our citizens. I urge you to please support Senate Bill 32 -- section 32 of Senate Bill 261. Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Tasha for your testimony today. I thank you for also submitting the very specific language that you had in mind. I know DMV has been working with you and your members for a little while trying to accommodate some of these issues. And it was a challenging topic for those of us who are not familiar with it on the Committee and certainly in leadership, it took us a little while to understand what the issues were, and I appreciate your Associations work with us. Are there any questions? Seeing none, thank you so much for your testimony.

TASHA CUSSON: I appreciate it. Thank you so much for your time.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Mr. Aris Stalis, how are you?

ARIS STALIS: Good afternoon, thank you for having me, Chairman Lemar. Again, thank you, Chairman Lemar, Vice Chair, Cassano, Vice Chair, Simms, and members of the Transportation Committee. My name

Aris Stalis. I'm a landscape architect here speaking on behalf of the Connecticut chapter of the American Society of landscape architects, and we strongly support House Bill 5429. We've submitted testimony, and I'll simply kind of paraphrase and kind of go through some -- some things I've experienced in life, going back to even 1985 when some of my college friends, we did a quick one day road trip to Canada. And when people were crossing the street, they had their handout, as a signal to yield to pedestrians. And to us it was, oh, of that was a new thing. And well, here we are roughly too many years later, with more or less hair, and more grey hair. We're seeing this come to Connecticut,

I think it's a great thing. I literally just got out of an interview for another transportation project here in Connecticut. And this will be at the forefront of that project. The strength of Connecticut and its economy is about pedestrians and their safety to strengthen the town centers. And this type of legislation can help support that. And that's what's going to help Connecticut move forward and become a stronger state. Again, we urge you to support and vote this Bill forward for House Bill 5429. Thank you very much. And I'll leave it at that.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you for your testimony, both your personal experience and behalf on and on behalf of the organization itself. It's a great opportunity to work with your Committee in the past. And I look forward to talking with you more on some of these ideas. We know a lot of this comes down to good design as well, and your organization has been great at helping me think through some of those initiatives in the past, and I greatly appreciate it.

ARIS STALIS: Yeah. We -- we are always here to offer assistance in any way that we can help either educate or help clarify something.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you so much. Have a great afternoon.

ARIS STALIS: Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Excellent. Annie Hemingway, followed Bruce Donald. Hi, Annie, how are you?

ANNIE HEMINGWAY: Hi, my name is Annie Hemingway I teach Literature in NYU. We moved to New Haven about 16 years ago, thinking it would be nice provincial town, it would be really nice place after moving from New York. I got very badly injured at the corner of Elm and [inaudible] Three months after a back surgery it's really very difficult -- I don't know if it just due to bad sidewalks.

So I have friends who want to move out to Connecticut, they want to join me. But I told them, you just can't pick New Haven. I'm really sorry it's not safe for pedestrians. I don't drive, I don't have a driver's license. Maybe I'll just pick up a [inaudible] but I don't feel safe walking and you can't walk downtown. And the bikes -- the bikes there's nothing wrong with bikes on the sidewalks and they're not little kids, they're big kids [inaudible]

REP. LEMAR ((96TH): Thank you for your testimony and for your time -- I think we've lost you. Thank you Annie for your testimony. We lost you for a second there. And we'll follow up with your testimony. Bruce Donald to be followed by Thomas Lefebvre and then Dylan O'Connor.

BRUCE DONALD: Hello everybody. This is Bruce Donald. I am the Tri-State Coordinator for the East Coast Greenway Alliance. And Chairman Lemar, Members of Transportation Committee. I have already submitted written testimony. But I'm going to paraphrase a few things here quickly. On behalf of the East Coast Greenway Alliance, which is a 3000 mile multi-use trail system that connects 15 states

and Washington -- Washington DC, which is about 51% done in the state right now. We strongly support House Bill 5429, which will make streets safer in Connecticut. And importantly, provide needed small grant funding of bike/Ped infrastructure in the state. And I'll talk more about that in a minute. Because I am also the legislatively appointed chairman of the Connecticut Greenways Council, which vets those grants for DEEP.

So if you have any questions on how that works, chat me up on that. But the pilot program of automated enforcement of speeding violations around schools, and construction zones, will keep kids and construction workers safer. I just -- I firmly believe that. I think that if it's a pilot program, I think that it can be tweaked, moved around, and doesn't have the appearance of being, you know, a profit -- a profit motive, right.

Allowing municipalities to set the speed limit on municipal roads down to 20 miles per hour, I have served on the complete streets Hartford Board for a long time. It's been a long issue -- long held issue in cities that trying to change any kind of a -- of a speed limit is literally byzantine, it takes forever. And so I think this is very important. Statewide Vision Zero program, long overdue. But finally, I'd like to discuss the re-authorization of the relatively small amount of funding that the Greenways license plates provide.

That goes into DEEP's Greenways account, which, if you listened to Bill O'Neil, he gave you some -- a little bit of the background. That account has existed. And in fact, as a line item still exists. So the good news is that it would be really -- really quite easy to reinvent this grant program, this small grant program that provides -- well, really, it augments Connecticut DoT's money. And I say that because the vast majority of the federal and state money the DoT puts forward for Bike-Ped programs is strictly for construction, which has a

freezing effect on initiating new projects in the state. So the Connecticut Trails program, which by the way, still has not made the bonding agenda, unfortunately, was one of the main ways to get design funds for your new project. That's currently still stalled. But this is a smaller way to do things, for instance, like studies or pre-design work. And as such,

PHILIP MIANIERO, CLERK: Bruce, I hate to interrupt you, but you budding right up against the three minutes -- if you can just kind of wrap the thought you're on.

BRUCE DONALD: Yeah, that's really the thought, is that this relatively small amount of money from the Greenways plates will go to the right place. That's really the thought.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you Bruce for your testimony today. And for buttonholing me a couple of years ago, talking about this issue at a conference. You and Representative Devlin helped illuminate this issue quite a bit for me at the time. And it was grateful to have your -- your understanding of the -- of the program, how it could be utilized where the money went, and how this could help augment our investment in Greenways across the state. So I appreciate your commitment on these issues, and your ability to help reach out to other community in every way.

BRUCE DONALD: Well, thank you. This is an important initiative that you're -- that you're trying to get through and thank you for it.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you again, have a great afternoon. Next up -- I see Thomas is already in. Thomas. After Thomas we have Dylan O'Connor.

THOMAS LEFEBVRE: Hello, can you hear me?

REP. LEMAR (96TH) Yes we can.

THOMAS LEFEBVRE: Great. Thank you so much for having me. So, Chairman Lemar, Ranking Member Somers, Ranking Member Carney, Senator Cassano, and the Members of the Transportation Committee, I want to thank you for the opportunity speak. My name is Thomas Lefebvre and I am the Coordinator here at Transport Harford Academy - Center for Latino Progress.

I'm very happy to speak and I want to give my strong support to this Bill. We think that we're here to talk about what we need to have time to actually to implement some legislation which is going to protect pedestrians and cyclists, I think many people would be for me reminded us the number of casualty of victims of -- on the road. Many testimony also noted the fact that within many of our cities, there is a high proportion of households who don't have a car and who had to rely on walking or cycling when they want to go to work or to the groceries, and making them particularly vulnerable to the danger of cars and all the other non-abiding to the to the rules.

And what I also want to address is here is a culture of impunity that everybody who walk or go on the road in Connecticut can witness. If you look at statistics from the police department, it's just a handful of stops that they're making every day for speeding. And I think it is very important that this culture of impunity is going to stop and can be mitigated by some of the devices that this Bill is proposing. And you may notice that I do have an accent and I'm not a native English speaker and I've lived in Ireland and France, and I witness the introductions of speed camera and overnight the culture change. The people were slowing down way before the designated areas, it has -- a massive impact has been presented in my testimony on casualties and deaths on the roads.

So I also wanted to react to [inaudible] who was worried about being deprived from taking the speeds on the highways, I would argue here that actually this type of device makes the police safer on the highway and allows them to do their job separate if overall speed, decrease. And because the thing is, these speed cameras do work and have an effect. And it has been demonstrated over and over. And I also wanted to write to one of the people who said, well I mean, there is a range and you can drive at five miles above the limit, and so on. So I just give you the results, the rules are made to be respected. And this is why we have rules is why we have a society. And if you want to cycle to work, we need to all commit to abide by the rules in the end, our transportation system--

PHILIP MAINIERO: Sorry to interrupt you, but if you could just wrap up.

THOMAS LEFEBVRE: I just want to say that our transportation system reflect our society and who we are, and at the moment, it is a very selfish system, and this is why I want to put my strong support to this Bill. Thank you so much for your time.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you for your testimony today, both on behalf of Transport Hartford Academy - Center for Latino Progress, but also relevant experience that you've personally seen in the numerous places that you've lived in your lifetime. Hopefully, we can accomplish that culture change and give greater protections to pedestrians on our roadways. Thank you again.

THOMAS LEFEBVRE: Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Stacey Zimmerman, followed by Randall Collins.

STACEY ZIMMERMAN: Good afternoon, Chair people and Committee Members, it's a pleasure to see you all safe and well in this interesting time we're living

in. So my name is Stacey Zimmerman, I'm with the Service Employees International Union. We have 65,000 members here in the state of Connecticut and over 2 million nationwide in Canada. We're here today because we strongly support House Bill 5429.

In short, our members are dying, or being injured. And we have to do something. And we are willing to work with the stakeholders in this to make this Bill a reality. To protect those that are protecting us in making Connecticut a safe place to commute and drive, snow and sleet and rain and repairs that no one in their right mind would want to do but our members are out there doing. So you know, we need to protect them. We also want to oppose, not the whole Bill, but a section of Senate Bill 261 on lines 757 through 760.

I know they've been addressed earlier throughout the day. But I just want to put it in the context of what we're looking at is that we tend to subcontract things to folks. And then we don't train our workers that we have in-house, to maintain the systems or do this work that's necessary to keep these things moving forward. And since Democratic and Republican administrations, we have lost thousands and thousands of state workers, but continue to provide value added services. We don't want to see things such as the ID for digital version happen where we had no drains. And, you know, every Commissioner, whether it's this Commissioner in any department really needs to be -- go through the processes that we currently have, such as the State Contracting Standards Board. But I know you all are working on this. And it's been a long day. So I'll leave it with that. Thank you so much for doing this.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Stacey, for your testimony today, and thank you for speaking out on behalf of your members. Like you said we have talked about that section and trying to more narrowly define what it is that the DMV is looking

for and asking for. And I see your representable, I got you just a second and making sure that if they're asking for a specific opportunity, we understand the full extent and narrowly consider that opportunity. Not provide a blank opening, but which multiple things can get through, I appreciate your willingness to highlight that issue and speak on his behalf. A representable day.

REP. CARNEY (23R): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I apologize. This is a view I'm not used to when I tried to raise my hand. I don't know where the button is. I'll try and find it. But and I want to say thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know it's not easy. You're doing a great job in running this Zoom meeting. Thank you, sir. Mr. Zimmerman, I should know the answer to this. And obviously, one death is too many. But how many of your members have died? I am embarrassed to say I don't know, on the roads?

STACEY ZIMMERMAN: We've had at least one in the past year, I know someone else has been injured. We'd have to get back to Charles -- Carl Chisem to get the exact numbers from seat UI. And I don't want to misquote anything of that nature.

REP. CARNEY (23RD): Okay, thank you very much. And again, if you could get us those numbers, because that -- as I said, one is way too many. But I don't know how many of your members have been -- died in that line of work. And that's something I should know. And I guess if you could pass it on. I'd appreciate it. Thank you, sir. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Stacey, for your testimony today. And joining us via zoom.

STACEY ZIMMERMAN: Thank you so much.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Next on the list is Randall Collins, followed by Kyle Hultz.

RANDALL COLLINS: Good afternoon. My name is Randy Collins. I'm an Advocacy Manager with the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities. Here today, here at home today, I'd offer testimony in support of House Bill 5429.

A number of these -- the issues that are already -- portions of the Bill that are raised are recommendations that also have been included on CCM Policy Committee and are put forth in our agenda this year. Improving pedestrian safety is a key issue that that our members have worked on and pushed for over the last few years. You know, we've all obviously seen and you've heard from Mayor Elicker, Mayor Bronin, the rising issues, the numbers that are -- have increased pedestrian fatalities. Further compounding the issues, our municipalities are -- are in a fiscal bind, I'm not saying that we're looking at this as a revenue stream but it does -- the use of automated traffic devices is more cost-effective than being able to station a police officer on every corner to achieve that same goal.

Yeah, we can -- we should be able to utilize the technology so that we can push our police into more proactive community policing efforts. Rather than simply putting them as traffic enforcement. We also support the initiative to allow municipalities working within the confines to promote or to set lower speed limits, local officials, local traffic officials, know their communities, know what their roads can handle. And again, I think that it's an aspect of local control that they can do to make sure that their representative -- their residents are remaining safe. I know that we've been going for a long time on this so I will just summarize with that. Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Mr. Collins, for your testimony today. There was a testimony earlier on behalf of a transportation engineer in Stamford, who

suggested that local community didn't want the ability to deal with its speed limits in their communities. Is that's something you've heard from TCM, my understanding was overwhelmingly local communities were looking for it not to have this transfer to the state.

RANDALL COLLINS: I know a lot of our communities, it was something that -- that came up. And there we do have a number of communities that spoke or were -- had hesitation over it. But there were a lot of communities that truly did want it. But you know, we were looking at this as it's another tool, if a municipality that doesn't want that control, they wouldn't have to exercise it and they could push it off if they don't think that they have the technical expertise. So be it, but then you have communities and say, Yes, I could take advantage of this. I could utilize this to keep my residents safer. So not everyone has to use it. But I don't think we should prohibit those that could use it effectively from doing it.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Yeah, no, I think that's exactly right. I mean, I think the way we originally intended this, that we wouldn't want to force Mr. Travers in Stamford if he doesn't feel like he's capable of coming up with a program in Stamford that reflects Stamford's needs, he can turn it over to the state to the state do it for him. But a lot of communities do have that capacity and do have the engineering talent and do have the leadership to do it. So I think we want to allow those communities who are capable of doing it to do to do it. We don't want to force Mr. Travers to try to do it if he's not capable. And the other questions?  
Representative Carney.

REP. CARNEY (23RD): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Randy, for, for coming on. I just have one question regarding the municipal speed limits, and I guess I think about one of the communities I represent, and actually a town

neighboring south that I don't. But there's a road for example, called Balkam road that connects Old Saybrook to Essex part of the road is in Essex part of the road is in old Saybrook, it's actually a pretty dangerous road. So I'm just wondering if CCM say, you know -- I guess one of my concerns with this provision is, say Essex decides they want to lower the speed limit on their half, and Saybrook doesn't there could lead to some issues there. So I'm just wondering, as CCM -- if we move forward on this proposal, is CCM going to be able to kind of work out some of those issues if they arise, because I would just -- I'd like to see some consistency if we're going to do this.

RANDALL COLLINS: We'd be happy to work with our members and work with the Committee to make a process that works. I mean, I think if there's an area where there's a conflict, I've got to go back through and refresh myself on the language that has been -- that they've built up over the last couple days. But you know, work -- if there are concerns of work through the -- you know, state traffic commission, or, as I said, there's a number of different entities out there. I think, if you do have where I live, as you said, about a quarter mile down the road, it turns into Farmington about a half mile past that it goes back into West Hartford, you know, how do you deal with stretches of roads, that may present a problem where you don't want? No, literally a speed limit jumping 20 miles an hour, you know, every half mile?

So I think there would have to be standards and parameters that would be set before municipalities could do that. I think that we -- sure we could work with the committee, with DoT to make sure that -- again, it's done in a safe manner, because you also don't want somebody just jamming the brakes randomly and somebody behind them having no clue why they did that.

REP. CARNEY (23RD): Okay. All right. Thank you very much, Randy.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Randy. I think that's an important consideration that we'll have to fill how we handle roads that are multi-jurisdictional in nature. And I think DoT has some insight and advice on that as well. But I think the rule across the country is that they're able to figure this out Connecticut's relatively unique in our structure, retaining some protections on multi-jurisdictional. But thank you for your testimony today Randy, I appreciate it. Senator Cassano.

SENATOR CASSANO (4TH): I would just add that because of the changes made in PMD, a couple of years ago with the regional councils, that's another opportunity. There's a lot that's being done already in public safety. In different areas. And that's something that can be a no brainer for the -- for the cogs. And it makes sense to work together like that. They already doing it and that will be easy to do that, and the cogs also have do a lot of the traffic, transportation planning. So maybe they do have the expertise in some -- some of our smaller communities may not have that -- could take a look at how this could work better.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you very much. Next we have Dylan O'Connor followed by Kyle Hultz. Dylan when you join and if you could on--

DYLAN O'CONNOR: I think I'm on.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): There, we are

DYLAN O'CONNOR: I think I'm unmuted now. Sorry about that.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Perfect.

DYLAN O'CONNOR: Thank you. I appreciate the opportunity to speak. I would like to just talk a

little bit about my support for House Bill 5429. I'm talking in my capacity as an everyday citizen, and the father of three kids in the town of Fairfield, but also, I'm the Co-President of the Sheffield Village Association, which is a 501C3 nonprofit in the town of Fairfield. And part of what we deal with is traffic and safety concerns. And specifically related to House Bill 5429 and the automated speed enforcement. You know, I just want to make a point that I -- you know -- myself as well as the people that are part of the Stratfield Village Association would very much be in favor of you know, speed enforcement.

I think people drive recklessly around here and you know, specifically related to Stratfield road which is a state road that that goes right through our community. There are some crosswalks across that street that are that are very, very dangerous. I'm surprised no one's been killed recently. So, you know, I appreciate the opportunity to speak and like I said, just an opportunity for me to voice my support for House Bill 5429. And, you know, any type of measure that can be used to reduce the speed and make sure that people are being more responsible in our neighborhood.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Dylan, for your testimony and sharing your examples of what your life looks like what the effect of speeding and distracted driving is having just on the quality of life that you have and what you're able to do in your own community with your children. I think you and I probably share a very similar expectation of what our lives would be with our kids, allowing them to go outside and play and walk to the park.

And a lot of those very basic things are hard to imagine allowing our children to do on their own, simply because the rate of speed the level of distracted driving, the inattention that a lot of drivers have in our communities. And frankly, the lack of enforcement were able to provide them some

of these issues, as essentially turned those opportunities that we all thought we'd be able to provide for our children into fantasies. And I appreciate you sharing your time testimony. Representative McCarthy Bay has a question for you.

REP. McCARTHY VAHEY (133RD): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Mr. O'Connor, for being here with us today and for your work. I know that Representative Devlin and myself and the entire rest of the Fairfield delegation. I hope Representative Devlin is okay with me speaking for her, and just expressing her gratitude, I see her thumbs up. But my question for you is, you know, what -- what kind of size of the group is the Stratfield Village Association and in terms of, you know, a lot of the work being related to traffic and pedestrian and bicycle safety, you know, would you say that, that ranks at the top or near the top of the numbers of things that you hear from people about?

DYLAN O'CONNOR: So the size of our group is -- is, you know, we have -- it's hard to tell you what the size of the group is outside of what our Facebook following is. So I hate to have to say, you know, what, but we have about 1200 followers on the group, there's about 7,000 households in the Stratfield Village Association. So, you know, I think we have a, we've -- we've cast our web pretty -- pretty wide. And I think we have the ear of most of the Stratfield Village, which, as I said, is around 7000 households.

But as it relates to safety, absolutely. Pedestrian safety and responsible driving is a big part of what we do. To give you an example of, you know, what that looks like for us, we're currently working with the town, as well as the state on a safety and beautification project at the intersection of Fairfield Woods road, and Stratfield road, which is kind of the heart of our of our community. It's been neglected for a long time, it's an unsafe intersection. So we've raised close to a million

dollars to, you know, get that to a place where people feel comfortable walking there, and it just looks a little nicer. So, you know, clearly safety is important to this community. We are a community organization, which ultimately boils down to the people who are in the community. So safety is certainly paramount for our organization.

REP. McCARTHY VAHEY (133RD): Thank you for that. And I'll just note and thank the fellow legislators and the administration, some of the million good chunk, the majority of that million dollars is infrastructure investment funds that came from the state, and that safety improvement project wouldn't have been possible, most likely without it. So thank you so much, Mr. O'Connor. And thank you, Mr. Chair.

DYLAN O'CONNOR: Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you. I'm going to -- Kyle Hultz followed by Tom Swan. Again, we have a list of individuals who may not have been here when originally called, make yourself known to our Clerk and they will let you in on the waiting room if you're still wishing to speak. Kyle Hultz, Tom Swan and Helia Bidad.

PHILIP MAINIERO: I believe Helia Bidad has been brought it seems Tom Swan and has just disappeared off the attendees list. We'll try and get him back.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): No problem. Helia, you're up next. If you are -- there we go. Good to see you. And you are live on Zoom.

HELIA BIDAD: Great. Thank you. Dear Chair Lemar, Vice-Chair, Cassano, Vice Chair Simms and Members of the Transportation Committee. My name is Helia Bidad and I am a resident of New Haven. I'm testifying in support of House Bill 5429.

I will be submitting my written testimony and will read it at this time. On the afternoon of October 6, 2020, I learned that one of my classmates at Yale Law School died in a tragic bicycle accident at the intersection of York Street and South frontage road in New Haven near the Yale New Haven Hospital. For over 15 hours, my classmates and I knew nothing about which of our classmates had passed other than what we had read in newspapers. But it was a male, 25-year-old Yale Law student. I've never quite experienced anything like the evening of October 6, I broke down in tears upon hearing the news and began what ultimately turned into a long night of texting every single person I knew who could possibly fit the description of the individual who had died.

I cannot communicate to you the agony hundreds of my classmates and I experienced as we waited for responses in order to determine which of our friends was responsive and alive. I wish that experience on no one on the morning of October 7, 2020, the Law School informed us that Chris Qian Whoa Lim, a member of my second year class had died. Chris was a bright and kind student who was destined to make a positive impact in his community and in his career. What makes Chris's death particularly painful is how preventable it was. Traffic deaths and injuries are wholly preventable.

I think any of us would be hard pressed to find a justification for not passing these necessary effective and reasonable traffic safety reforms that could save real lives. Chris did not expect to die on October 6, and his loved ones did not expect to lose him. The next traffic death could be you, me through no fault of our own. But through the policy and infrastructure inadequacies in the state of Connecticut. In particular, I write to support the automated speed enforcement pilot program, the pilot program provides a cautious and measured way to implement a strategy that could effectively deter

speeding and the very real risk of injury and death that speeding poses.

I appreciate that the proposed Bill mitigates privacy and due process concerns through relevant provisions that only record images of license plate numbers and provide ticketed individuals with the opportunity to assert defenses in response to the alleged violations. An added benefit of this effective and reasonable traffic safety measure is that it serves as an alternative to traditional enforcement, which can be both racially biased and life threatening itself. The proposed Bill as a whole provides a well deliberated effective and measured response to the unacceptable rate of traffic deaths in Connecticut.

I also write in particular support of the components of the proposed Bill that would give greater -- that would give local authorities greater control over speed limits, pedestrian safety zones and bikeways and pedestrian walkways. I'm grateful to Chair Lemar for proposing this Bill and to the entire assembly for its consideration. House Bill 5429 presents a great opportunity for the General Assembly to protect the lives of Connecticut residents, I hope you support its passage.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you for your testimony. And like you and I have talked a number of times before and I'm having a hard time when I think through the number of issues like this I've seen in our city for frankly, two decades, and issues that we've tried to advance in that period of time to a level of safety and control speed and not having visible rate and level that we've seen throughout New Haven, frankly, across the state and country. It's really challenging to have this conversation, I appreciate your willingness -- willingness to do so to talk about a classmate of yours. And to know that we have this responsibility to make things better. And to know that it was entirely predictable at that very specific location. And

that there are, frankly, hundreds of those specific locations across our state right now.

We are no longer surprised to find out that someone's been hit while crossing the road or someone's passed away as a result of distracted driving or high rates of speed. And it is incumbent upon us to look at the strategies that other states and municipalities have incorporated have adopted that have been proven to demonstrably -- demonstrably improve safety on our roadways. I appreciate it. I know you appreciate the many concerns people have about the use of automated technology. And I think we've come up with a thoughtful program.

And like I've told everyone, I'm willing to look even more how to how to make this better and make -- simply addressing the equity concerns associated with any type of enforcement. But the results are in across the country, these work and improve safety for all of our residents and it would be great if we no longer had to look at predictable outcomes, knowing that we had obvious solutions that we just didn't have the temerity to enact, and I appreciate your willingness to share the personal story and to work with me on -- on a lot of these issues locally in New Haven. Thank you very much. Are there any questions for Helia? If not, thank you for your testimony. Excuse me. Erin Rosenstein fell by Andrew Granato and Andrew Giering.

PHILIP MAINIEIRO: I do not see Aaron Rosentein but I believe Andrew Granato is here.

REP. LEMAR (96th): I see Andrew Granato. Andrew, you're next followed by Andrew, Giering.

ANDREW GRANATO: Hi, everyone. And thank you to the members of the Transportation Committee for hosting this Public Hearing. My name is Andrew Granato. And like the previous speaker, I'm a resident of New Haven, a student at the Yale Law School. And I'm

calling in to communicate my strong support for House Bill 5429.

I also remember the night that a classmate was struck by a car and killed, I happened to meet the exact description of a 25-year-old male student at the same school. And so over the course of that night, I started receiving messages, kind of asking -- you know, starting off in life, I was okay, how I was doing. And as the hours passed, the pretense was dropped. And I started receiving more and more messages from people asking me directly if I was still alive.

It was a thoroughly you know, unnerving experience, to say the least. And it's -- it's something that, you know, obviously, while it does not compare to the experience of people who have actually been, grievously injured or worse, killed, or who are very close with people who have experienced such things, I think it's a microcosm of just the seriousness of this situation and the urgency, which reform is needed.

I've lived in Iowa, Ohio, and Illinois, I've lived in quite a few places. And the situation with traffic safety, I think here in New Haven is worse than I've seen in any of the places that I've lived. I've regularly watched cars, blow through red lights, I regularly hear stories from other students or from people around town about close calls that they've had, from -- from getting hit by cars or accidents of various sorts. And I -- it just has to be the case that this is a situation that can be improved. And I particularly want to discuss the inclusion of the pilot of automated speed enforcement. I believe that this will aid in preventing these sorts of injuries, while remaining fair to drivers while edge -- by ensuring that you know, only drivers who genuinely are speeding dangerously or running red lights will be penalized. This takes away the discretion, I believe that can

often come with relying on police to conduct traffic stops.

Situations that you know, as unfortunately a lot of national news stories have shown over the years can lead to dangerous situations. For both officers who, frankly, have way more important things to be doing, as well as the passengers who -- and sometimes in very extreme situations have even died due to officer shootings that have occurred in situations that began with traffic stops, which often, many studies have concluded around the country suffer from a lot of the racial bias issues that occur in policing generally. I strongly--

PHILIP MAINIERO: I hate to cut you off, but you're right about the three minute deadline if you could kind of finish your thought.

ANDREW GRANATO: Thank you. Yeah, I just think for those reasons. I think that House Bill 5429 is a good start, and I strongly support it. Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Andrew, for your testimony before the Committee today and sharing your personal story and about your classmates, and we do send our condolences for you and for a lot of your classmates who wanted to testify tonight. But we're limited by the time availability. And thank you for the work and research you've done today. Are there any questions for Mr. Granato? Seeing none, thank you again, Andrew.

ANDREW GRANATO: Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Andrew, Gary, followed by Jordan Force. Hi Jordan, how are you?

JORDAN FORCE: Good. Can I -- can I go?

REP. LEMAR (96TH): You are you're live on zoom. Thank you for joining us today.

JORDAN FORCE: Okay, perfect. Hi, I'm Jordan Force. I'm from Greenwich. I already submitted written testimony in support of House Bill 5429.

But I would like to reiterate my support for the automated speed enforcement. I'm a driver, but I'm also a cyclist, and regularly pedestrian. And I frequently see people driving at reckless speeds like the roads are racetracks. In fact, when I was in high school, people would regularly just sort of race down hillside road, which runs right parallel to the high school through a school zone. And on the post road, frequently, when I'm crossing the street in a crosswalk, drivers will just sort of blow through the crosswalk, even though they're supposed to stop.

I'd like to also express my support for increased funding for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. In Greenwich, there were roads without sidewalks that are very busy roads. And I was actually a passenger in a car that almost hit someone on Valley Road. There's no sidewalk in that section, and there's very little margin on the side of the road. And while Stamford is making progress on a lot more cycling infrastructure, bike lanes, mainly large parts of Greenwich, Norwalk are just simply too dangerous to bike in. A lot of traffic combined with no bike infrastructure. That's all I have to say. Thank you for letting me speak.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you for joining us today and providing your testimony on behalf of this issue. We are hearing from folks from all across Connecticut and I think this issue mainly germinated in New Haven in Fairfield over the last few years, but we didn't know that the situation impacts people across Connecticut, no matter where you live. The staggering rate of crashes, fatalities, pedestrians, and cyclists is a Connecticut-wide issue, and thank you for sharing your testimony your experiences in Greenwich and, and hopefully we can pass some laws that will help improve pedestrian safety and cyclist

safety for everyone. So thank you again, Jordan. Yeah, Andrew Giering is Andrew in. If not, we have John Johnson. And John Disette.

PHILIP MAINIERO: I believe Mr. Disette has just been added. John, if you could unmute yourself and turn on your camera.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): John, good to see you. You are live here and joining us on the Transportation Committee and the floor is yours.

JOHN DISETTE: All right. Thank you. I'd like to thank you, Representative Lemar, as well as Senator Cassano and the rest of the Committee. Before we do get started, I have been with you guys since noon. I would like to echo the sentiment of Representative O'Dea and say, you have done a fantastic job of conducting this today. I am John Disette, I'm the President of A&R Employees Union, Local 4200.

I am looking to speak in opposition to Senate Bill 261, in particular Section 13. I have heard your comments throughout the day that the DMV is willing to work with us on some of the language changes. I do, rather than go through my testimony, I did submit written testimony. I will not belabor the point, I just wanted to let you guys know that I too, am opposed to that language. And I do look forward to working with the DMV in fixing the problems that we see in this testimony -X Excuse me in this in this proposal. All right.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you. Appreciate it. Yeah, there's -- we highlighted the issue when customers started to come in yesterday that this may be something that we need to revisit. It's clear from our conversations with DMV that they do not envision moving as far as the fear currently is. But I think they also recognize that that's a very large door they've opened. And -- and fear is justified in many ways, when the legislation is not narrowly tailored to specifically reference what

they're looking for. And that we will really need to be considerate if we're going to move forward on that section at all. So I appreciate your testimony.

JOHN DISETTE: You bet and we look forward to working with them to fix the problems that we see, all right.

REP LEMAR (96TH): Any questions? Seeing none. Thank you, John. We are up to number 53 on our public testimony list out of 71 we are coming close to the end. If there are folks who are before number 53 on our list who are not in the meeting at the time they were called, please just identify yourself through Phil Mainiero, our clerk, you'll be in the waiting room and he'll let you in immediately. So that you can be the next to testify. With that we're up to I think Giering was at 49. John Johnson was at 51. Guy Gleysteen at number 53.

Unfortunately, I do not see Guy but I do see Mr. Victor Lee, who is the next speaker on our list, and I have admitted him, Victor, if you could turn on your camera for us.

VICTOR LEE: Thank you. Can you hear me?

REP. LEAMR (96th): We can. Victor, thank you so much for joining us today. Just before I get too far ahead. I want to thank Phil Mainiero for his work this is incredibly difficult to pull off. And it's hard looking at multiple screens and trying to figure out where we are with panelists and attendees and -- and who's in the waiting room and who's not. And Phil is doing a fantastic job helping me figure this all out because otherwise I'd be lost. So thank you, Phil, this is incredibly challenging. I think we're pulling together. Okay. So I just want to thank you. And for everyone who's waiting to testify. I know these games can go on longer than we anticipate. I know you're sitting by your

computers. We're trying to get to you quickly and give you the time that you deserve. With that, Mr. Lee, you're before the Transportation Committee today and thank you very much.

VICTOR LEE: Thank you and thank you, Phil, for organizing this I agree it looks like a very difficult task and it's really appreciated. Anyway, my name is Victor Lee and I'm a medical student at Yale and a resident of New Haven. I'm testing -- I'm testifying to communicate my strong support for Connecticut House Bill 5429.

I live at the Yale medical student dormitory located on 367 Cedar Street in New Haven, which is located on the intersection of South Frontage Road and York Street. On the other side of this intersection is the Yale New Haven Hospital. This intersection is regularly crossed by hospital staff, patients, students, and other staff who work in this building. But it has a very deadly history to it.

There have been three fatal traffic accidents involving pedestrians at this intersection in recent years, several factors may have played into these accidents including road design. However, it is very noticeable that there are an alarming amount of red light runners at this intersection. I counted red light runners at this intersection with some classmates and found that there was usually at least one red light runner at every red light that occurred. Sometimes it's just as a red light happens sometimes it's several seconds after the red light has already started. And you really are -- this puts pressure on the pedestrian to have to keep an eye out for any cars that might be running a red light as they're about to start crossing. So that -- these red light runners may have contributed to the reason fatalities and can definitely contribute to future fatalities.

Having to cross this intersection regularly with everyone else who lives and works in my building, as

well as the hospital I constantly have fear for the lives of myself and those around me. Earlier in this hearing, we have already heard the stories of some of these fatalities. And that is a few too many. I truly hope that we can do anything we can to prevent any more future fatalities. I strongly support House Bill 5429 and urge you to favorably vote the Bill on the Transportation Committee. Several studies have shown that automated speed enforcement can reduce the number of red light runners and subsequently save lives. Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Victor, for your testimony and for sharing your experience. Moving and traversing the roadway that we've talked about quite a bit today. As you likely know, we've talked about is, this is an issue that we see firsthand in New Haven and we've had some really tragic experience with very obvious solutions put forth in our Bill as a Connecticut issue as well that we're seeing every community, increasing number of fatalities and crashes involving pedestrians. Thank you for sharing your time and testimony today about that issue.

VICTOR LEE: Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): I see Andrew Giering has joined us and Andrew you're next up. We will then move on to Abby Roth and Max Chaoulideer. Andrew, thank you for joining us.

ANDREW GIERING: Good afternoon. Thank you Chairman Lemar, Ranking Members Somers and Carney Vice-Chairs Cassano and Sims and Members of the Transportation Committee. My name is Andrew Giering, I'm testifying today as a resident of New Haven in support of House Bill 5429.

This is an incredibly thoughtful truly Omnibus Vision Zero Bill and has many important and literally life-saving provisions. But I would like to speak on just one aspect and that's the Bill's

provisions for automated speeding enforcement. I believe that automated enforcement is not only an essential safety reform, but it's also a very necessary reform in policing.

Automated enforcement will do more than any other Bill I'm aware of in judiciary or otherwise, to improve the way that Connecticut residents interact with police. This is because statistically the leading cause for interactions between law enforcement and Connecticut residents is the police-initiated traffic stop.

And the number one reason for traffic stops is speeding. It is unfortunate that the most common way for residents to encounter police that is being pulled over for speeding is also one of the most unwanted and unpleasant.

Traffic stops are incredibly stressful for drivers and officers both and all too often escalate into violence. Traffic stops are especially dangerous for black drivers who are more likely to be stopped than white drivers and this Bill will eliminate the possibility of racial profiling in speeding enforcement by taking the human component completely out of the equation, and providing the cameras be allowed to take pictures of only license plates and not people. Police-initiated speeding stops leave it entirely up to the officer whether to make the stop in the first place, and then whether to let the driver go without a warning. Give them a ticket as to search their vehicle or escalate the situation even further. This entire interaction vest police officers with vast discretion. Automated enforcement eliminates that discretion.

Speed cameras can powerfully eliminate all the subjectivity of human perception. The camera doesn't notice or care what kind of car you're driving, what shape it's in, how many occupants it has or what their race might be, the camera sees only a speed and a license plate. Under automated

enforcement, no person is personally targeted, harassed, or even delayed. Traffic stops are also, frankly an incredible waste of time. Even the most routine incident free traffic stop requires one or several police officers to spend valuable time waiting to catch and then ticketing and infraction when instead they could be investigating misdemeanors and felonies, participating in victim outreach, walking to beat in their community, or attending community meetings and events. Among their many other duties in a society that asks law enforcement to do their job and everybody else's job too.

In a world where automated enforcement is widespread, or say in present day Europe, residents would be more likely to encounter a police officer for citizen-initiated contact, such as when reporting a crime reporting an emergency, attending a community or neighborhood event, or applying for a permit. Imagine how much more positive and productive the relationship between police and Connecticut residents could be if we only increased the proportion of police encounters that were positive by reducing the proportion of those that are incredibly negative and stressful.

As it stands now, without automated enforcement, most residents' sole contact with the police is statistically being pulled over on the side of the road heart racing, fumbling in the glove compartment for their paperwork.

PHILIP MAINIERO: Andrew, I hate to interrupt you. But you're right at the three minute deadline. If you could kind of finish your final thought and move to the question answer from the Committee. Thank you.

ANDRE GIERING: Yes, sir. Automated enforcement will make an unprecedented contribution to more consistent, fair, impartial, and comprehensive enforcement of speeding loss. As last year's police

accountability Bill reflects the General Assembly is increasingly looking for non-police solutions to social problems and automated enforcement is just such a solution. Speeding cameras can address the problem of life threatening speeding, while also reducing problematic encounters between law enforcement and residents. What's more, by changing the reason why most Connecticut residents interact with police, the Bill can help improve the currently fraught relations between law enforcement and the public. I respectfully urge the distinguished members of this Committee to support House Bill 5429. Thank you for your very important work.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Andrew, for your testimony today. And thank you for your guidance on some of the issues that you highlighted. We spent a lot of time in New Haven talking about these issues.

You've been a valuable resource in trying to think through how we can handle some of the privacy concerns associated with the cameras itself. And I think -- thank you for providing that level of analysis and ensuring that I'm getting parts of this right. Working with our legislative team.

My attorneys here at FCO, Katrina Stratton, who's been an extraordinary resource for the Committee on a number of these privacy related issues, we've been able to identify some of the more salient concerns across the country with the implementation of these programs. I think we've addressed most of them. I know we still have some work to do. But I do appreciate your willingness to work with me and others to craft the relevant program, thank you again.

Are there any questions for Mr. Giering? Seeing none, thank you so much for joining us tonight. I have Abigail Roth is up next. Miss Roth is number 55 on our list, if you are before number 55 on our list that missed the window, which we originally called you, just as you join the meeting as you're in the waiting room in our Committee Clerk will let

you into the meeting and you'll be next to come in. So anyone who may have missed their opportunity. Please feel free, feel free to join the meeting. And we will let you in. With that we have number 55, Abby Roth. Good to see you Ms. Roth.

ABIGAIL ROTH: Hi, thank you Chair and Vice-Chairs, Ranking Members and Members of this Committee for holding this hearing and for considering my strong support for House Bill 5429.

An unacceptable number of pedestrians and cyclists are being killed in motor vehicle crashes in our state. This Bill will make our streets safer and save lives. It also will reduce the huge economic costs of traffic accidents and fatalities. I support all the provisions of this Bill but will focus my testimony on those which address speeding which is so deadly.

A car driving at 20 miles per hour will kill or seriously injured pedestrians in approximately 15% of accidents. That percentage sadly jumps to 80% for a car driving at 40 miles per hour. This Bill offers common sense and well tested solutions to determine this illegal deadly behavior.

While the proposal to allow for local control of speed on local roads is very important, without enabling law enforcement unfortunately, its value is limited. As much as I wish we could stop speeding through education and road infrastructure alone, the reality is that without a deterrent, many people still will speed.

Therefore I strongly support the pilot since Bill for automated enforcement in school zones and construction zones. The New Haven Police Department and I'm sure many others in the state just don't have the capacity with all their other responsibilities to carry out the consistent enforcement needed to end speeding.

Even if they did, there are compelling reasons to avoid this approach. Automated traffic enforcement reduces deadly potential -- potentially deadly. Traffic stops and if the cameras are thoughtfully distributed, ensures consistent applications the law to deter speeding without the risk of implicit or explicit racial bias, which unfortunately exists in traditional police enforcement of traffic laws.

New York City's successful use of speed cameras in your schools is just one example of how automated enforcement actually changes driving behavior and can be implemented equitably. In 2014 2018, 81% of drivers who received a ticket from a speed camera in New York City didn't receive a second one. Speeding was reduced by over 60% and between 2012 and 2016, the number of deaths decreased by an average of 55%.

I work at the intersection of York street at South Greenwich road in New Haven at Yale School of Medicine across the street from Yale New Haven Hospital two pedestrians and one cyclists have been killed in traffic crashes here since 2008. Have you heard some about today, walking to work, I daily witnessed the race tracking chaos in South Frontage Road?

The excessive streets are extremely concerning because the area also has a high volume of cyclists and pedestrians, some of whom are especially vulnerable because they have a disability or illness which limits mobility or older pushing a stroller.

These safety concerns are shared by everyone I know who works or studies are travels to this location. Given these conditions, I very much hope this Committee will consider slightly expanding the eligible area for speed cameras to include being near hospitals locations with many vulnerable users. I'm serving my six years and older in New Haven in a word that includes South Greenwich Road in York Street.

Traffic Safety is the issue I hear the most about from constituents, people are demanding something be done to stop the dangerous speeding behavior that is so common on our streets, this Bill would be a significant step to save lives and improve the quality of life for everyone in our state. Thank you for considering my testimony and my strong support of this Bill.

REP. LEMAR (9TH): Thank you Abby Roth for your testimony and for your advocacy locally in New Haven on so many of these issues referenced that Alder Roth represents, a large portion of the district I used to formerly represent when I was on the board of Alders in New Haven. And it is concerning that we've seen it magnified over the last few years. But certainly a situation that we've known and worked on for a few decades, frankly, an experience across the state of Connecticut has only made it what we've seen and dealt with for those decades, magnified as community after community has seen the growing rate of speed and pedestrian activity, fatalities dramatically increase. It's a national issue. It's a statewide issue. I thank you for your support in trying to provide local solutions in New Haven. But we do need those of us who stayed on and step up in some way to -- to help. I appreciate your testimony. Are there any questions for Alder Roth? Seeing none, thank you again for your testimony.

ABIGAIL ROTH: Thank you all.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Mr. Chaoulideer, you're up next. And if I mispronounced your last name, I apologize.

MAXIMILIAN CHAOUIDEER: No wonder -- you're not the first no problem at all. Can you hear m All right?

REP LEMAR (96TH): We can.

MAXIMILIAN CHAOUIDEER: Excellent. Well, good afternoon. Thank you very much for the chance to

speaking today. My name is Max Chaoulideer. I'm a resident of New Haven and testifying to communicate my very strong support for House Bill 5429.

As you've heard from so many others today, our state faces a mobility crisis. With a withered public transportation system and cities and rural areas designed entirely around maximizing the speed and efficiency of private motor vehicles. We face the consequences. Our streets are not safe. They're not fair.

And they're not sustainable. Though no one benefits from cars being down roads and impacts those who are already the most vulnerable children, the elderly, pedestrians, cyclists, those who are not able bodied, and those who are already racially or economically marginalized. All of us have been or will be vulnerable users of our streets at some point.

Many of us have experienced the ridiculous peril posed by simply moving around the place you're supposed to feel most comfortable. Though I like many who testified today experiences danger on a daily basis. As someone who is virtually everywhere on foot -- on foot or by bike. I faced the most extreme consequences of this two years ago. On a sunny Saturday afternoon, my friend Donnie and I were biking near Sleeping Giants State Park to get ice cream when a driver sped around the corner and veered across the double yellow lines.

By a stroke of luck, the car missed me by a few feet, but hit Donnie head on. Donnie died that night in the hospital. This should have been a freak accident. Preventable crashes like these happen all the time. Nothing about this tragic incident was accidental. Every day we continue to prioritize the movement of cars over everything else. Accepting the injuries, pollution, and injustice of it has acceptable side effects. It does not need to be this way. As our

representatives, you carry the great power and responsibility to work to reclaim our streets for the health, joy, and safety of everyone. This Bill will not address every issue, would take a huge step towards making our streets safer, more equitable and greener.

Though I support all the provisions of this Bill, I'd like to particularly express my support for instituting a pilot program for automated speed cameras. I believe in self-enforcing streets, and I hope that someday we will redesign our roads, such that we need no enforcement at all. But in the meantime, we must act to enforce the most basic traffic safety parameter, speed. Whatever your stance on police reform is, it's irrefutable that our current practice using armed police officers to enforce everyday traffic infractions is both ineffective and potentially very dangerous, especially for black and brown drivers. As countless studies have shown speed cameras, reduce speeding, greatly reduce injuries and deaths, and offer a transparent and data driven alternative to traditional enforcement. That does not rely on anyone's discretion. This Bill would allow us to join communities and states from across the country and the world in implementing a simple, fair, and transparent enforcement mechanism to make our streets safer for everyone. I strongly support House Bill 549 and call on you to reclaim our streets for the health, joy, and safety of everybody by favorably voting for this Bill. Thank you

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you for your testimony this evening. And thank you for your work and advocacy with safe streets in New Haven And more broadly, your work to make New Haven a safer place in a variety of different ways. I know you have interests that go beyond just the streets and traffic safety issues. And I appreciate the time and effort and energy you've lent to this issue over the last year. I greatly appreciate your work. Are

there any questions? Seeing none, thank you for sharing your story today and your testimony.

MAXIMILAN CHAOULIDEER Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Next up is Bill Scalzi followed by Lior Trestman

BILL SCALZI: Hi, thank you, Representative Lemar and Members of the Transportation Committee. My name is Bill Scalzi. I'm president of M 7 transportation serving basically a large footprint in Connecticut, we offer taxi and livery services, wheelchair accessible services. We offer a lot of COVID-19 positive patient services. And we've been doing so for the last 33 years.

I wanted to express my opposition to Section 8 of Senate Bill 261 and I can scream recommendations by the Department of Motor Vehicles. Specifically, I'm referring to the proposed increase for taxi cab insurance by a multiple of 500%.

We're in strong opposition to that. That proposed increase in the limits necessary to operate a taxi cab is both unnecessary and has the potential to force even more taxicab companies, particularly the one and two car companies out of operations. In fact, since DEP published the idea last year, and seven my company has reached out to its insurer has been unable to procure a financially feasible policy for its suite within those new limits.

This proposal tries to compare the limits set on transportation network vehicles, the TNCs to those set on taxicabs. And that's not a proper comparison, because the vast majority of the time that a TNC is on the road it's covered by the driver's personal automobile coverage. It's only when the passenger gets in that the higher limits are in effect. And even then there's not the owner of the vehicle or driver that has to carry the

insurance, but the unaffiliated transportation network company.

Taxi cabs are subject to numerous restrictions and mandates that TNCs are not restricted by taxi cabs must pick up all passengers requesting rides in their territory and are not free to redline or exclude riders from their taxi cab or booking platform.

In further contrast, taxi cabs must carry on coverage for 24 hours a day regardless if a passenger is present. And in fact, regardless of the vehicles even on the road, there is no available market to provide a taxi cab with on or off insurance. In fact, a national compromise had to be reached between the insurance and the TNC industries in order to for them to be able to procure such policies.

When Connecticut's TNC statute was passed, the Bill originated in the Insurance Committee. An entire section was dedicated just to codifying the national model that had been agreed to by the industries. Without such a similar in depth look into this issue, it would be impossible for taxi cab companies and mechanic in Connecticut, to meet to proposed requirements. Taxi cabs are some of the most regulated inspected vehicles on the roadways, with drivers who have passed national fingerprint background checks.

There is no outcry that would necessitate this potentially killing -- industry killing proposal. We would like very much -- you know, we're eager to work with DMV on this. You know, if there are ways we can improve upon the insurance, quite frankly, it's different for taxi and livery vehicles. And when you're talking about the -- the four door sedans in both of those industries, then what are we doing the same jobs--

PHILIPMAINIERO, CLERK: pardon me Bill, like I hate to interrupt, but you're right up against your three minute time limit, if you can kind of wrap it up, and we'll move to the Committee questions.

BILL SCALZI: Yes, I can do that easily. I was just done. So we're here to work with DMT in the future, but we just can't pass this, this is really the worst time in our industry to pass it because we've been hit so hard by the COVID pandemic. Thank you very much.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Bill, for your testimony. And this is something we've been talking quite a bit about, screening, the chairs and ranking members trying to understand this issue a little bit more in depth. We might need to bring you in for a consultation on it, because I think the representation that we've heard is, this is largely industry standard rates and coverage levels. But I'm hearing from you that this -- that's far from the case, and in fact, would jeopardize the industry as a whole if we were to adopt it. So I think there's some level of understanding that I don't currently have right now that I'll need some further education on. And it may be useful for us to schedule a time to go into more detail on this issue.

BILL SCALZI: I'm happy to do that. As a matter of fact, I heard last year in February and again, last week, I called up to a few insurance brokers and \$500,000 on taxi cab insurance, I don't believe is even available in Connecticut right now. So and if it is it's going to be incredibly cost. So the cost is going to basically drive us out of business. So yes, I would love to meet with you again, and discuss this at your convenience.

REP. LMEAR (96TH): Thank you. Are there any questions for Bill? Seeing none, thank you so much for your testimony today.

BILL SCALZI: Thank you all.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): I don't look like we have any of the people that we missed earlier. So I think we are at No. 59. We have Lior Trestman.

PHILIP MAINIERO: Yes, that should be correct. Followed by a Rohan Mornington Jr.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): I'm not seeing Lior.

LIOR TRESTMAN: I'm here.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Oh, Okay, good. Lior, thank you for joining us in the Transportation Committee today.

LIOR TRESTMAN: Thank you. Excuse me. Thank you for having me. Dear Chair, Lemar, Ranking Member Somers, Ranking Member Carney, Vice-Chair, Cassano, Vice-Chair Simms, and Members of the Transportation Committee. Thank you all for making it possible to speak in spite of the circumstances and for giving us the opportunity to do so. My name is Lior Trestman. I grew up in Norwalk, Connecticut, I went to college at the University of Connecticut. The past five years I've lived in New Haven, Connecticut.

Speeding is a cultural norm across Connecticut, and reckless and dangerous speeding with a feeling of absolute impunity is a cultural norm in our cities. Hundreds of people have been killed just this past year because we've been unwilling to address this problem. This makes Connecticut an exception. This is not the norm in other places. Somehow. Here we gotten to the point where traffic fatalities are seen as inevitable and unavoidable, because somehow we've come to see the right to drive however you please as if it were constitutionally protected. It is not. And this mindset needs to change because there are no traffic deaths that are accidents.

Each and every one is absolutely preventable. I personally was hit by a speeding truck three years ago. I was told by every one of the many healthcare providers I saw that I was lucky to be alive because many of the victims they see are not. I hesitated to tell people even my parents until a few days later, knowing the implied I told you so, for daring to be a bicycle commuter.

There are at least -- excuse me, 66 pedestrian and cyclists in Connecticut in 2020 alone, who we're not as lucky as I was. The group Real Hartford publishes an article every single month listing the pedestrians killed just that month. Everyone has a long article, and I would encourage you to read them. And this is not a problem that you can relegate to pedestrians and cyclists alone, there were over 250 people killed in car crashes, many of whom would still be live if speed limits were actually enforced. Connecticut desperately needs its drivers to obey the speed limits and years of evidence have made it patently obvious that police officers do not have the ability to do this effectively, in spite of how much perhaps police unions might want otherwise. anyone who's been on a road knows that it's just -- it's just obvious, besides our police officers have better more productive things to be doing that play better to their skills rather than holding a radar -- radar gun to issue infractions.

We need to adopt the solution who's across the country and around the world, and use automated speed cameras. If it's good enough for New York City, it's good enough for us. However, thus far, we just haven't seem to care enough to do it. We've come up with deflections and excuses, but it has proven deeply defective at saving lives. And at this point, it seems to me to be a moral imperative. If you're worried that this would just disproportionately affect minorities, considered that New Haven 30% of households don't have or can't afford a vehicle. And the people of color made up

the majority of pedestrians and cyclists killed by speeding cars. I understand that some of you might feel that they are logistical concerns. It is, however, a matter of logistics to address those concerns and imperative for this legislature to pass this Bill into law. Because people are dying, and we don't stand a chance at so much of slowing the increase in deaths every year, every year until we do. Let's give people another reason to be proud of Connecticut. Thank you for your time.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Lior Trestman for your testimony today for joining us as part of the Committee and your work with St. Jude's New Haven and beyond. I have question from representatives of Zupkus.

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH): Yes. Hi. Thank you. Thank you for your testimony today. And I'm glad that you're with us being hit. I'd like to just ask because I know I ride bikes, my husband and I and in New Haven around Yale and you have to go out on the street and zigzag it's brutal. And cars do fly. They don't stop in the crosswalks. Where was it where you got hit? Was it in a school zone or was it a construction zone?

LIOR TRESTMAN: It was I believe in a school zone. It was at the intersection of Chapel and Orchard bypassing Greenfield campus, the hospital. So looks like actually most of New Haven could potentially be covered by school zones. And so in my case, I think this, this would have helped to slow the vehicle down. And, you know, at the very least mean that I was injured less. You know, even if the truck still decided to, you know, to drive illegally as it did, you know, I could have been in the hospital.

REP. ZUPKUS (89TH): Right, and I apologize. You heard my dog barking? No, no, no, no. So where were-- so were you in a school zone? Or was it near? You were saying New Haven is mostly covered by school zones is

LIOR TRESTMAN: Right. Yes. So, I believe so. But I don't want to say with certainty because I haven't actually seen a map that depicts exactly where the radius of each school zone is. But I would venture to say that I was it was at the intersection of Chapel and Orchard schools.

REP ZUPKUS (89TH): Great, thank you. And I'm glad again that you weren't hurt so bad and that you're here.

LIOR TRESTMAN: Thank you and thank you for your question.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, representative. Are there any additional questions for Mr. Trestman? Seeing none, thank you for joining us this evening and thank you for your work in New Haven and beyond. I appreciate it. Next we have Rowan Mornington. I see Rowan, and followed by Alexandra Moch.

ROWAN MORNINGTON: Good afternoon, Chairman Lemar, Chairman Cassano and distinguished Members of the Transportation Committee. My name is Rowan Mornington Jr. I'm a transportation maintainer, three loader operator for the Department of Transportation. I've worked for the DoT since 2000. And I strongly support House Bill 5429.

A short story unfortunately, I am dealing with the ramifications of unsafe driving through work zones. In September 2019, while working a night shift for Tree Removal on I95 North on Old Saybrook, I was struck by a tour bus traveling 80 miles per hour. Even with all the precautions we took that night, and take and take on every worksite the driver chose not to obey the warnings. There were overhead signs turned on, a full lane closure pattern in effect, four crashed trucks, and two work like trailers on site. The[inaudible] sign pattern [inaudible] merged into the left lane was -- was required.

However, after passing three crash units, he decided to move back into the right lane, he decided to move back into the right lane. It was there that he realized there was another truck, which was me. He hit the brakes and skid approximately 100 feet into my unit still traveling approximately 75 miles an hour. The impact caused the impact attenuator unit on the back of my truck to fall completely to the back of my nine ton dump truck, where it put me into a wheelie and push to be another 80 feet down the highway.

Thankfully, I was not closer to the men working on the road or the outcome would have been horrific. Unfortunately -- or fortunately, I was not killed. But I sustained several injuries. My right calf had a big hole in it from the shifter box. I tore my inner and outer meniscus on the dashboard with my knee hitting the dash. I now have 10 bulging and herniated discs in my back and will have lifelong back issues. I face financial issues and impact both physically and mentally. I can no longer perform my job that I have had for 20 years and will likely end up on disability. Sadly, I was looking forward to retiring in four- and-a-half years.

Motorists do not respect the work that we do. Whether it be while we're plowing snow or while we are working on the highways and work zones. Change needs to happen. We must do something to teach the drivers that there are consequences to their actions. These are men and women's lives on these roads. There's no monetary value for that. Thank you for letting me testify.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Rowan for your testimony and sharing this experience with us I had an opportunity over the last few years to meet with a number of folks who work alongside you or work in different maintenance work zones. And they share shockingly similar stories about near misses about driver intention, about the rate of speed about the number of times that they go home at night. And it

takes them two, three hours before they can relax and settle down. Because they just are constantly dealing with what I would otherwise interpret as a form of PTSD. Like really, the number of near misses that they experience on a daily, weekly, monthly basis is overwhelming. And this is the reason why we're considering this type of technology. I mean, no one -- no one wants to put up speed cameras that are evaluating you for how fast you're going, we all hope that we could rely on each other, to obey the normal rules of the road and treat each other safely and honestly and protect one another.

But the point matter is the examples we've seen across the country, or when you put up speed cameras, behaviors change, people slow down. Our workers are protected. And we improve general safety for everyone. So I thank you for the work that you do, and sharing the experience that you have. And I know it's shared by countless scores to hundreds more people in the same position. I appreciate the work. I know everyone who's in this Committee appreciates the work that you do. We're thankful for it. And hopefully we can get you additional protection.

ROWAN MORNINGTON JR: Thank you. I agree completely. We would all love to be able to have state troopers in our work zones. But that's -- I don't think that's a feasible thing to happen with the number of work crews out on the road on a day to day basis. But it isn't getting any safer out there. I can tell you that much. Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you. Are there any questions? Seeing none, thank you for your time today.

ROWAN MORNINGTON: Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): I have Aleksandra Moch, followed Kevin Stark. Mr. Clerk, I don't see Alexandra in.

PHILIP MAINIERO: We do have Kevin Starke in meeting but I do not see Alexandra.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): All right, Kevin, are you available?

KEVIN STARKE: I am.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Excellent. Thank you. Here we are.

KEVIN STARKE: I'll be brief.

REP. LEMAR: Welcome to the Transportation Committee today.

KEVIN STARKE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee. I'd like to speak in favor of the Bill by focusing on what I think are the essentials. I'm not so sure this is as much about speeding as it is about a deeper problem of driver attitudes. And I think that the state has a chance to make a real difference if we focus on the right spots.

I interact with the issue in two main ways. The first is that I've been a cyclist and a runner in Connecticut since I was a kid growing up in Danbury. The second is that I live on State Route 59 in Fairfield, on Stratfield Road that was mentioned earlier by Sarah Roy, Dylan O'Connor and Representative Cristin McCarthy Vahey, who obviously did a very good job getting the word out about this hearing today.

Directly in front of my house for the past 19 years is one of those crosswalks mentioned several times. And it leads to the Assumption school and church which is my next door neighbor. What I've noticed from my two main channels of interaction is that drivers in this state and I'm sure it's not just Connecticut, but we'll focus on what matters most to us. They act as if cars have priority on the roads and don't have to yield to anyone, which I know is wrong from my own driver education program at the

DMV in Danbury 30 something years ago. Cars almost never stopped for kids in the crosswalk in front of my house. They've knocked me off my bike twice and caused me -- I don't even know how many close calls.

The crosswalk in front here used to have a sign that said state law stop for pedestrians and crosswalk that got removed. Now it just has a school crossing sign. I'm not sure what prompted that change. But it has made things worse. In other places, I see signs that say share the road or remind drivers to give cyclists three feet of clearance. But it almost seems like the signs are being rationed throughout the state. I don't see any consistent message from town to town or road to road.

And I think that's important because I think we could make progress on safety if we made existing drivers and not just student drivers aware that they don't have priority on the roads. I'm not even sure share the road is the right message because it implies that drivers have something to give to people on foot or on a bike. Road isn't theirs to share. I'd really like to see state and municipal agencies implementing this legislation to focus on broad messaging that says something like cars don't own the road.

Enforcement is great but the police can't be everywhere. And for the record, they're almost never nearby when some kid is trying to cross the street in front of my house. I really think this has to be about a substantial public education campaign aimed at changing driver attitudes. It'd be great if that included TV and radio, internet and yes, more street sides. Thanks for your time.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you for your testimony today and for the broad experience that you have as a cyclist and runner, both in Fairfield, but beyond. I think you're right, like part of the obligation of a state is to ensure that our messaging is consistent, that when we pass laws, we do notify an

educator about their responsibilities. And I think that's incumbent upon us. We have focused quite a bit on education in the past few years. And I think we have more to do still, specifically after we passed this Bill, it is my hope that we can redouble some of those education efforts, and ensuring people are fully aware of their obligations. Thank you, Kevin, for that. Representative McCarthy Vahey.

REP. McCARTHY VAHEY (133RD): Thank you, Mr. Chair, I know you're shocked to see my hand raised. I'm very grateful, Mr. Starke for your presence here today. And while I may have done a good job getting word out, the reason that people are here is because of their experiences as pedestrians and bicyclists. And your point is very well taken in terms of helping to shape attitudes. And I will just point out, you know, social norms campaigns, which we use for in Social Work often in substance use prevention. Those are the kinds of things you need to do with respect to this issue. So I just wanted to thank you, Mr. Starke for pointing that out. Because, yes, we need to change infrastructure. Yes, we need to change laws and do all these things. But part of this is about changing the social norms and how we look at vehicles and who's, -- who's is what? So just to thanks. And thank you again, Mr. Chair.

REP. LEMAR: Representative Carpino.

REP. CARPINO (32ND) Thank you. And thank you, Mr. Stark, again, for bringing up the point about education and getting out the word as representative McCarthy Vahey also pointed out is really important component of educating the public. I just want to say, I spent some time living in Europe and at no point was ever afraid of riding my bike on a road and it came down to really education, their system for getting a license is much more stringent than ours is in the United States. And the education component for recognizing pedestrians and bicyclists around you even in the rural areas is much stronger.

So that's something that you know, we need to focus a little bit more on the education component of it. But I do thank you very much for your testimony.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you. Any other questions? Seeing none. Thank you Mr. Starke for testimony today. Next, we have Melinda Tuhus, followed by Pavla Rosenstein. Is Melinda in?

PHILIP MAINIERO: Melinda is in the room. I'm going to ask her to unmute and open your camera now.

MELINDA TUHUS: Hi.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Hi Melinda, how are you?

MELIND TUHUS: Good, how are you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Good. All right Melinda, thank you and welcome Transportation Committee today.

MELIND TUHUS: Thank you, Chairman Lemar, Ranking Member Somers, Ranking Member Carney, Vice-Chair, Cassano, Vice-Chair Simms, and Members of the Transportation Committee. My name is Melinda Tuhus, I live in Hamden.

I'm a founding member of Elm City cycling about 20 years ago, and I'm writing to communicate my strong support for Connecticut House Bill 5429. I was an almost daily bicycle commuter from my home to downtown New Haven for 33 years before the Coronavirus intervened, and I hope to return to my commute as soon as possible.

Despite my love of cycling, it is terrifying to have motor vehicles speeding past me at well over the 25 mile per hour limit. And even that is too fast for comfort. I have had some close calls. But the one that stands out was a time I was cycling North on orange Street. A street with mixed residences, schools, and small businesses. And a car came speeding right at me heading south.

I really thought it was curtains, but perhaps my screaming or his or her own awareness caused the driver to swerve away at the last moment. I believe, and data from other cities backs this up, that if we could get automated speed enforcement in Connecticut, we could reduce the carnage happening on our streets.

For example, a meta-analysis of speed cameras studies showed that deaths and serious injuries were reduced from 30 -- between 30 and 50% and New York City's use of speed cameras in school zones showed that from 2014 to 2017 81% of motorists who got ticketed did not get a second ticket, and speeding was reduced by more than 60%. I support all the elements of this Bill. But one of the best things about automated enforcement is that it removes most of the direct contact between motorists and police and interaction which has turned deadly into many confrontations of police with African American drivers.

Preliminary counts from the State Department of Transportation show that 65 pedestrians were hit and killed by vehicles and Connecticut in 2020. In New Haven, 11 pedestrians were killed last year and along with two cyclists, the key thing is not quote who's at fault, quote, unquote. The key thing is the speed at which motorists travel on our streets. Research shows that a car driving at 20 miles per hour will kill or seriously injured pedestrians and approximately 15% of the accidents while that percentage jumps to 80% for a car driving at 40 miles per hour, so twice as fast, and four times more than four times as many injuries and deaths.

The Bill provides for pilot projects and up to 10 municipalities and includes multiple privacy and other protections. The cameras take photos of license plates, not drivers and drivers are only ticketed when going at least 11 miles per hour over the speed limit. Which is why I support another

provision in the Bill that would allow cities and towns to reduce the legal speed limit below 25 miles per hour. I strongly support House Bill 5429 and urge you to favorably vote the bill out of the Transportation Committee. All road users deserve to feel safe and to be safe. Thank you for your work and for the opportunity to testify.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you Melinda for your commitment to this issue for a number of years for being an educator on this issue. Back when I first was a member of the Board of Aldermen in new event A few years ago. And I want to thank you for your leadership with the issues New Haven that organization has evolved over the years you've been a steadfast advocate who has remained committed and passionate about these issues. Thank you for all of your work. Are there questions for Melinda? Seeing no questions, thank you, Melinda for your time and testimony this evening.

MELINDA TUHUS: Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Next we have Pavla Rosenstein, followed by Eric Hammerling and Rob Rocke. Hi Pavla, how are you?

PAVLA ROSENTEIN: Hi, I'm good. Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Welcome to Transportation.

PAVLA ROSENTEIN: Thank you very much for having me and for holding the public hearing. My name is Pavla Rosenstein. I'm a PhD student at the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Yale University. And I'm currently a resident of New Haven. Prior to that I've lived in Greenwich, Connecticut since 2017.

I am testifying in support for House Bill 5429. In particular Item 5, which would allow municipalities to set speed limits and pedestrian safety zones, and Items 7 and 8 that would enable the use of automated

enforcement in work zones and school zones. I would particularly like to express strong support for automated enforcement. I have spent over 20 years living in the UK, where automated enforcement is the norm and a popular way to ensure road safety.

I have experienced receiving a traffic ticket once during my time there. And it was a painless and convenient experience. I received a ticket in the mail, which I could pay online by mail or over the phone with a 50% discount if paid within 14 days, and I have never had a negative interaction with the police in the UK.

Speed limits are clear in the UK and tickets are given when the speed limits are broken not at over 11 miles over the limit. Conversely, I was once a passenger in a car that was stopped by the police on a route in New York State. Even though the driver had broken no rules and was traveling within the speed limit.

A police officer violently approached the car with a drawn gun aimed at all of us inside yelling at us to get out and banging on the car door, then when we got out he searched the car without a warrant the driver and all of the passengers. The driver was arrested and taken to a local police station, then charged with several crimes, none of which were committed and generally handled abusively. It was a terrifying experience and only after significant legal, financial and time resources were put into the case was the driver able to defend himself against such charges and they were all dropped.

However not before significant trauma and damage to the driver, the passengers and a waste of police resource and court resource. Automated enforcement has a number of key advantages for all road users including the police. Number one, it allows police to use their manpower more effectively and keep police officers as well as members of the public safer number two, it prevents dangerous and

sometimes deadly encounters between members of the public and police which are armed. Number three, it prevents racial or socio economic discrimination by the police by focusing on data the speed driven by the car, and license plates, not the drivers appearance.

Number four, it allows a more effective, less stressful, and less dangerous way for municipalities to monitor speeding and for drivers to pay fines. Number five contrary to the fear regarding privacy or invasiveness, a fine in the mail is a much less invasive way to be monitored on the road than encounters with armed police.

Finally, I'd like to point out that automated enforcement can assist with police response. In my neighborhood in New Haven we frequently encountered speeding cars which sometimes use the roads to speed away from a location where crime was committed, but are difficult to trace thereafter. Automated speed cameras would help police identify problematic repeat offenders and assist with crime response. Additionally, I'd like to express support for better road safety infrastructure walking around both Greenwich and New Haven in Connecticut is dangerous. A large number of roads do not have sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, traffic calming measures or adequate signage signifying speed limits. Road design does not make it easy for drivers to stick to the speed limits.

When I use Connecticut's roads as a pedestrian or cyclist I do not feel safe enough when I use Connecticut's roads as a driver. I'm aware that the road design requires effort to effectively limit the driving speed. Better road design would help all road users, pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. Public transport--

PHILIP MAINIERO: Pavla, I don't mean to interrupt you, but you're right up against the three minute time slot if you can kind of wrap up your thought

and move to the question answer section. Thank you very much.

PAVLA ROSENSTEIN: Yeah. I've lived in several different municipalities around the world in Czech Republic in the UK and Thailand and the US the road and street infrastructure in Connecticut is by far the most antiquated and dangerous I've experienced. I cannot over stress how important improving the infrastructure is. 12 pedestrians and cyclists have died prematurely and needlessly in New Haven last year alone 65% in the state of Connecticut, I strongly support House Bill 5429. And I'd like to encourage all lawmakers to continue to do the good work in educating ourselves on how the current situation can take it. It is neither normative nor saving us for the state's residents. Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Pavla for your testimony, for your research and for your work with so many of our constituents in New Haven, the Safe Streets organizations, and the time you spent with me on some of these issues as well. I know that you're going to be pushing hard for the types of investments that we need the type of enforcement that we need to make our city truly safe, and walkable, and I greatly appreciate it. Are there any questions for Pavla? Seeing none, thank you so much for your time. Next we have Eric Hammerling, followed by Rob Rocke.

PHILIP MAINIERO: Unfortunately, I do not see Eric in the waiting room. I have admitted Rob Rocke. Rob, if you'd be able to turn your camera on.

ROB ROCKE: I am here.

PHILIP MAINIERO: Wonderful.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you. Welcome to the Transportation Committee this evening.

ROB ROCKE: Thank you. Good afternoon Chair, vice chairs, Ranking Members and Members of the Transportation Committee. My name is Rob Rocke and I live in New Haven. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today with my enthusiastic support for House Bill 5429. Early on in the COVID 19 pandemic, I hoped that having less traffic on the road would lessen drivers road rage and that our streets would become safer. Alas, it quickly became apparent that I was naive. And the opposite is in fact the case. Traffic violence has become arguably worse than before. We need an all of the above approach to reducing traffic violence in Connecticut. The common sense elements of this Bill can help. Cities should be able to set speed limits below 25 miles an hour on roads where it's deemed appropriate by the local community.

Drivers should have to stop for a pedestrian at a crosswalk before the pedestrian has stepped foot into the roadway. And drivers should be held responsible for failing to prevent dooring cyclists by opening their driver side door without looking first. Yet, as I walk, ride, and yes, I do also drive around the state of Connecticut. It's the enforcement piece that I continue to find so obviously missing. We all see it. It's the Wild West out there.

Drivers are speeding, they're talking and texting on their cell phones. They're disregarding the basic rules of the road, whether that's running stop signs on city streets or aggressively changing lanes including passing on the right on our state roads and highways and they're not getting pulled over.

In this era of tight budgets, fewer police officers and competing priorities. I do not see the amount of traffic enforcement being done that is necessary for holding drivers accountable for endangering our lives. We've created a fleet we've created a feedback loop where consciously or unconsciously drivers see other drivers getting away with it, so

they do it to poignantly, the Black Lives Matter movement has also taught us that we should be trying to avoid unnecessary interactions between the police and the public, especially our black and brown neighbors.

Now is the time to finally embrace automated speed enforcement. Properly implemented, which I think the details of this Bill clarify the neutrality of automated enforcement, a ticket is automatically given to every driver who speeds through an intersection pre-selected for its risk in a school or work zone, when driving at more than 11 miles an hour over the speed limit is arguably a more equitable approach to traffic, law enforcement, with no possible unconscious bias of an armed police officer pulling over a driver to give them a ticket for a motor vehicle violation.

Keep in mind, this is just a modest pilot program, I think you should be able to get behind this legislation, whether you're for or against automatic speed enforcement, confident that the data collected before, during and after the pilot program in multiple communities throughout our state will prove your case for or against. Thanks for your time.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Rob for your testimony. And more than almost anyone else on this issue has spoken here today. I've had great experience working with you over my time, before I was even an elected official and just fulfill a faith advocate and finish off Stafford in the city planning department back in 2003, you were the person who was helping to educate me a lot about a lot of things I didn't understand about cycling infrastructure at that point in time.

So I greatly appreciate the person that you've been in our community, helping to push us to become the type of city we market ourselves as. Your leadership and, and throughout that has helped us become that city and I think we often hold ourselves

up as being a walkable bikeable, pedestrian friendly city, but the experiences is that we've seen show us to be far from what our vision of ourselves is. And we need this level of enforcement the state level to achieve that. And as you said, it's not just the New Haven issue, we're talking over 60 fatalities across the state of Connecticut accidents consisted of Connecticut this year. And across our country, we're seeing an explosive rate of crash fatality. And we need to combat it with all of the tools available to us. Thank you for your time and for your effort and testimony tonight. Thank you all.

ROB ROCKE: Thanks for all you're doing. Appreciate it.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Seeing no other questions? Thanks again.

ROB ROCKE: Thanks, everyone.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): We have Gannon Long to be followed by Sherwin LeGendre and that will conclude those who have signed up to speak this evening.

GANNON LONG: Thank you, everybody. Thanks for so much, Phil, and everybody for getting me on the list at the last minute. I appreciate it. And to everybody who's testified here today, to the Chairs and the Ranking Members, Members of the Transportation Committee. I'm grateful to you all for inviting our public testimony here today.

My name is Gannon long. I'm from Hartford, and I'm here today as the Policy and Public Affairs Director for Operation Fuel. So we're the nation's oldest fuel bank. And we provide utility and water assistance to over 6000 families across Connecticut in the past year. So we're the state's fuel bank.

And first, if anybody listening is looking for help with your utility and water bills, we now have an online portal, encourage folks to apply at, you can

also go to a fuel bank at different locations around the state. But that website is Operation fuel.org/gethelp. And I appreciate the committee's indulgence, to share that. But please do let us know if you have constituents who are looking for aid on utility assistance.

I also just want to commend the Department of Transportation and the leadership and that agency. You know, those of you who have worked on this Committee and are here now for a while, you know, you work closely with this agency. And I just think they've done a great job in supporting some really important pedestrian safety measures in this Bill, as well as their work in the Governor's Council on Climate Change.

And I just want to extend that appreciation. So I guess the main reason we're here today is to support House Bill 5429. It's a tremendous work product. And operation fuel is primarily as I said, utility and water affordability organization, but transportation inequality imposes a tremendous cost and opportunity burden on our clients and other low and moderate income residents across our state. And unlike in these other areas like energy, housing, water, there's very similar, very few similar support programs like operation fuel for folks who faced transportation barriers.

These costs are highly variable, they're second typically only Rent as part of household budget, and lack of affordable, accessible safe transportation options is a systemic barrier keeping many Connecticut residents from accessing necessary services. We have a report we collaborated on with the VEIC and the Green Bank was produced by the VEIC so we can share that link with the Committee as well. And there's a number of measures, folks, I've been really touched by the stories folks have gone into the details of why this Bill is so important. And we support many of those. I want to the crosswalks, and those are common sense things.

Aberration field is particularly keen to support the greenways fund. I think this is an area where, you know, we can address a lot of issues at once, right, we can talk about transportation safety, we can talk about active transportation, we can talk about public health, and we can talk about reducing pollution and greenhouse gases. And so I think that's really important that we consider the Greenway trails not just as recreational paths, but as ways that people get from where they are to where they need to be. Folks have mentioned and I want to remind us all today, that in Connecticut's four largest cities, more than 25% of households don't own a car at all. So by necessity, you either have to walk there or get there some other way or you don't go, and that's the opportunity cost I'm talking about. So when we're talking about low and moderate income communities, and Connecticut in our in our clients, I think we need to remember the diversity of that category. We're thinking really broadly about people who might be white, black, brown, multiracial, differently abled, people who aren't fixed income versus variable income for Social Security versus a minimum wage shot with inconsistent numbers.

PHILIP MAINIERO: Just one second, again, I hate to interrupt you. But you're right at the three minute time, if you could kind of wrap up the last thought we'll move to the question answer from the community.

GANNON LONG: Thank you. So and, and I am wrapping up. So we're talking about folks who live on all different kinds of streets, whether they're busy, quiet, littered, shady, green, clean, Sunny, dirty. And I want to ask everybody on this committee, is it safe for you to walk from where you live to somewhere you're going? And shouldn't it be for all of us, transportation burden and opportunity cost, other challenges facing low income residents of our state? This Bill really addresses those really head

on, we appreciate all the work that's gone into it. And we urge you to support favorable passage out of the committee. Thank you for the Bill. Thank you for your service to our state.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you again, and for your testimony tonight. And thank you for your testimony and prior roles. And prior iterations of this Bill's conception and Public Hearing process. In the past years, I know, your professional world has changed with your personal advocacy. You care deeply about this and improving transit options, pedestrian safety, for so many of your neighbors, here in Hartford, or some of the other folks that are represented. So I appreciate your time and your willingness to come to Committee and share your experiences and a broad array of information that you find is going to be appreciated.

GANNON LONG: Thank you.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Are there any questions again? Seeing none, thank you so much for joining us tonight. We have Sherwin LeGendre, and I believe that is the last of the folks who have signed up this evening, who are in attendance. And if anyone is watching who wishes to testify on this, I've in your view pre-registered, I think you can still join in via the link that you were sent. And we will call you from the waiting room to the public hearing. With that. Sherwin, you have the honor of bringing us home this evening.

SHERWIN LEGENDRE: Good evening. I appreciate you all hearing my testimony because, as I said, Good evening, Chairman Cassano, Chairman Lemar and distinguished Members of the Transportation Committee. My name is Sherwin LeGendre, I'm a transportation maintenance and still one of the stewards Department of Transportation. I've worked with DoT since 2014. And I strongly support House Bill 5429.

I cannot stress to you the extent of the hazardous conditions myself my co-workers face daily while working to improve the roads, the bridges, the highways, and that motorists travel. We are consistently dealing with drivers who are distracted, driving too fast or simply not paying attention. Not only is this dangerous for the work zone, maintain -- maintain us but it's also it also affects other motorists on the road. Shortly after beginning my employment with DLT during the summer of 2015 I was almost hit by a speeding truck on Interstate 91 north in Enfield.

Even though there was about a quarter mile of cones and work zone signs, warning drivers of the upcoming work zone and in 2017 one of my co-workers was hit while he was sitting in a work zone in this crash unit.

Thankfully, he was not hurt. Many of our -- many of our jobs are performed in work zones where there is no police presence. Without any real enforcement drivers do not abide by the laws pertaining to work safety. House Bill 5429 would provide a strong deterrent to encourage drivers to slow down when driving through work. So not only would this legislation help allow for automated traffic enforcement, it will also require the Commissioner of transportation to develop and implement a public awareness campaign to educate the public concerning unsafe driving in work zones. As a side note, when I first started working the DoT I realized that private contractors have a police officer beat India work zone. And I noticed a difference between the way how the public drivers react to the state trooper with them on a local road to town police officer with them, as opposed to our orange lights. We are in danger. And we would appreciate you all voting and giving us this Bill. Thank you very much.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Sherwin, for your testimony and for your service to the state of

Connecticut in so many ways. And I've highlighted this before, the number of conversations I've had with maintenance workers across Connecticut, who go home every night, needing a few hours to relax from their daily activities, working on behalf of our residents. And near misses the accidents that they implant in fear is really dramatic. And we need to do something to protect folks who are working at more sterile basis. And I greatly appreciate your testimony on their behalf.

SHERWIN LEGENDRE: Thank you, sir. Appreciate it.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): Thank you, Mr. Clerk, I think that exhausts our Public Hearing list for the evening. And if there are no other registered attendees who joined the waiting room, I just want to thank you for all of your help in pulling this off tonight, managing the multiple windows and multiple screens and the signup list and the registration links and getting those links out is an arduous task that you have performed brilliantly for us. We were the first patient prestige Committee was the test case for the legislature and calling off a fully activated Public Hearing on multiple bills. And I think we exceeded the expectations. Thankfully. We were we also the first Committee votes, I believe, a couple of weeks ago. And so I think I think we're doing an okay job meeting the needs of the technology that we have to have in play during COVID. And I want to thank Committee members for their specific on-point questions of the people who came before us and our ability to engage on these topics. Understanding that technology limitations that some of our testifiers may have. And I'm deeply appreciative of everyone sticking through.

One of the benefits of this type of public hearings, I think we had greater attendance throughout more of the hearing than we otherwise would have just because it's easier for folks to stay in the meeting. When they don't have to bounce around to

different Committee rooms all over the Capitol. It's easier for folks that focus in and be here for a great periods of time, and I think it helped the conversation quite a bit. So thank you all to Committee members. With that, Senator Cassano?

SENATOR CASSON (4TH): Yes, Mr. Chairman, I just want to thank you. You know, this was something new to all of us. And you did a magnificent job of doing this, keeping it under control. You're probably the only one that didn't take a bathroom break. It's been a long day here today with incredibly good testimony. You know, if you want, if you want -- something that really hits home, we start today, in real, real black and white right there in front of us. It was a pretty powerful day. And you kept it flowing well, and Phil, tremendous job on your end. Thank goodness, you guys understand the technology part of it. Some of us have been lost. I'd be the first one to tell you I'd be one of them. Really appreciate the job you did today. Thank you. Representative Carney.

REP. CARNEY (23RD): I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And, you know, certainly I'm glad the Transportation Committee is the first for -- for these many things. This legislative session, it's certainly a different sort of feeling. But I'm glad so many people were able to come on and access us, legislators to discuss issues of importance to them. So it's definitely going to be, hopefully a very positive session with this. And of course, I'd be remiss if I didn't thank Phil for all his hard work, it was pretty seamless. So great job. And, you know, I look forward to seeing everybody, early Friday to talk about the Port Authority.

REP. LEMAR (96TH): That is correct. And thank you for highlighting that. We are back for our final Informational Forum on Friday morning at 9:00 am. With the Connecticut Port Authority, we anticipate this being a very robust conversation. I know there are different thoughts and ideas about how we

proceed with the Port Authority going forward. I look forward to having our new Executive Director introduced to the full Committee, but to explore their responsibilities and how they've met or not met the expectations of this Committee over the last year, and what we envision them doing in the future.

So we welcome you back on Friday morning to conclude this very long and very important week in Transportation Committee. I thank you all for your willingness to be a part of this today and seven hour Public Hearing or seven hours' worth of transportation communications today is a lot and I know a lot of folks will have questions concerns about the bills we heard both of them are omnibus large bills. These as we go into screening amongst the chairs and rankings. Let other myself senator Cassano represent Carney or Senator Somers know about any specific concerns that we could try to address them before we get to the bills before us. So thank you all. And that concludes the Public Hearing for this evening. Phil, any final words you need for the committee?

PHILIP MAINIERO: No, Mr. Chairman. That handles our business for the week. Thank you very much.

REP LEMAR (96TH): It does not handle our business for the week.

PHILIP MAINIERO: No, for today.

REP LEMAR (96TH): For today. Handles it for today. We'll see everyone back Friday morning at 9:00 am. For the Connecticut Port Authority. You will see the calendar invite with all the details in the Zoom link. Thank you, good night everyone.

PHILIP MAINIERO: You should all be receiving your invite for the Informational Hearing as a calendar invite with the Zoom link included in it. I'm planning in sending those up tomorrow morning to

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lo/mi

January 27, 2021  
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE 12:00 P.M.

make easier to differentiate them from the mass  
you've received the past two days.

REP LEMAR (96TH): Have a nice evening.