

SUPPORT THE PROTECTION OF ALL USERS OF CONNECTICUT'S ROADS

Support SB 720: AN ACT CREATING PENALTIES FOR CAUSING HARM TO, OR THE DEATH OF, A VULNERABLE USER OF A PUBLIC WAY

Purpose:

Connecticut has made great strides towards creating safer environments for all users of the State's roadways. The 2009 enactment of Complete Streets legislation, which requires road projects to incorporate infrastructure for all users of the road, will put Connecticut on a more sustainable transportation path in the years to come. Unfortunately, Connecticut's roads are still hostile to non-motorized users because of a dearth of enforcement when drivers are careless.



Needs:

Careless drivers injure thousands of vulnerable users every year in the United States. In Connecticut alone, 117 pedestrians and cyclists were killed from 2007 to 2009 and injuries to pedestrians and cyclists average approximately 1,500 a year. Unless there is evidence of drug or alcohol use, or a hit and run, these drivers are rarely held accountable for their potentially devastating, and preventable, actions.

Bill Overview:

The vulnerable user bill consists of several components, **none of which require any additional revenue** from the State for enactment. The bill would:

- Establish a class of vulnerable users of a public way.
- Define vulnerable users of a public way as pedestrians, highway workers, a person using a wheelchair or motorized chair, persons riding or driving an animal, persons operating farm tractors (or implements of husbandry without enclosed shells), bicycles, scooters, roller or inline skates, and skateboards.
- Establish penalties for infliction of serious physical injury or death to a vulnerable user when a person fails to operate due care when using a motor vehicle. The penalties include:
 - A motor vehicle operator's retraining program and;
 - Performance of community service and;
 - A fine of not more than five thousand dollars.

Bill Myth:

While the vulnerable user bill increases fines and penalties for those that operate motor vehicles carelessly, it does not absolve vulnerable users from safely utilizing roadway infrastructure.

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TRI-STATE TRANSPORTATION CAMPAIGN



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