

Re: HB 5420 -- AN ACT CONCERNING DRIVER RESPONSIBILITY AT INOPERATIVE TRAFFIC CONTROL SIGNALS

MTAC Supports

Chairman Lemar, Chairman Cassano, Ranking Member Somers, Ranking Member Carney, and members of the Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. My name is Joe Sculley, I am the president of the Motor Transport Association of Connecticut (MTAC), which is a statewide trade association representing more than 500 businesses, most of which are small business trucking companies.

MTAC supports this bill, which would “require a motor vehicle operator, when approaching an intersection with an inoperative traffic control signal, to stop as though such intersection was controlled by a stop sign.” Candidly, I am surprised this is not already current law. This responsibility is something that I am personally aware of, and I know that commercial truck drivers are aware of it as well. But in the aftermath of tropical storm Isaias, it is clear that many passenger car drivers are not. I personally witnessed cars blow through major intersections with inoperative traffic signals without stopping. If drivers in every car, coming from four different directions as they approach an inoperative traffic signal, took that same approach, the result would be an ugly crash.

Another example of a time when we can be prone to inoperative traffic control signals is following a winter storm, such as an ice storm that knocks out power. Imagine a fuel truck encounters an inoperative traffic signal on the way to a deliver to a customer’s home. They stop at the inoperative signal, and then begin to proceed, only to be hit by a passenger car who did not stop. A disastrous crash will ensue.

We support this bill because this responsibility should be clearly articulated in law, and we also hope that as the bill proceeds, it generates a lot of discussion that the public will follow, and get educated in the process.

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ABOUT CT TRUCKING INDUSTRY:

85.8%: number of Connecticut communities that depend exclusively on trucks to move their goods

98%: percent of manufactured tonnage transported by truck in Connecticut

\$3.4 billion: total trucking industry wages paid in Connecticut (2018)

61,590: trucking industry jobs in Connecticut (2018)

\$55,777: average annual salary in Connecticut (2018)

\$9,026: average annual CT-imposed highway user fees paid by tractor trailers (as of 1/1/2020)

\$8,906: average annual fed-imposed highway user fees paid by tractor trailers (as of 1/1/2020)

