

Chief State's Attorney selection testimony

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Dear Members of the Connecticut Criminal Justice Commission,

Thank you for considering public testimony regarding the appointment of the Chief State's Attorney.

One issue I hope you will ensure the appointee takes seriously, is robustly enforcing traffic safety laws. I live in New Haven and walk over a mile to work each day through the Downtown, and again back home again in the evening. Every day I see multiple risky traffic violations, especially red light running. Vehicles run red lights and engage in other violations because there is little deterrent. I am on the New Haven Board of Alders and besides taxes, the most complaints I receive from constituents are about traffic safety, often complaining about the lack of enforcement.

Traffic violations are not just a quality of life issue, they result in serious injury and death. A recent report I read, the 2019 Connecticut Pedestrian Safety Guide, stated that in 2016, 61 pedestrians were killed in CT and in 2017, 55 pedestrians. In New Haven, just in August 2019, five pedestrians were killed (https://www.newhavenindependent.org/index.php/archives/entry/pedestrians_hit/). These crashes must be taken seriously, for example using the Vulnerable User law, which I am pleased was strengthened as of October 1, 2019.

The recent report I referenced above said that in 2016, Connecticut ranked 20th in the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's ranking of state's pedestrian fatality rates with a pedestrian fatality rate of 1.65 per 100,000 population. A Chief State's Attorney who robustly enforces traffic safety laws will create a deterrent which will save lives.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Sincerely, Abigail Roth (New Haven)