

House Republican Press Release

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Citing Fatal Accident on Route 6 in Bristol, Reps Hamzy, Burns Hail House Okay of Teen Driver Safety Bill



Measure will Help Reduce Serious, Fatal Accidents Involving CT Teens

A fatal accident on Route 6 in Bristol last August that took the lives of four young people and injured three others, two seriously, might have been prevented if a measure that that passed the state House of Representatives today had been in effect in 2007, state Representatives William A. Hamzy and Ron Burns said today.

The legislation (House Bill 5748) would increase the amount of behind the wheel, on the road training 16- and 17-year olds must complete before qualifying for a drivers license; set tougher mandatory drivers license suspensions for 16- and 17-year old drivers who violate certain traffic laws; and extend the passenger restrictions that currently apply to 16- and 17-year-olds after they are licensed from the first six months after being licensed to a full year, said representatives Hamzy, R-78th District, and Burns, R-77th District, who voted for the bill.

“Almost every day, I drive by the scene of a horrific fatal accident on Route 6 in Bristol that occurred last year,” said Representative Hamzy, who lives in Terryville and works in Bristol. “It is a tragic reminder of what can happen when teenagers drive at excessive speeds or take unnecessary risks behind the wheel. The likelihood of a serious or fatal accident increases significantly when one or more young people are riding in a vehicle operated by an inexperienced teen driver. The purpose of this legislation is to significantly reduce the number and seriousness of these kinds of accidents in the years ahead.”

“As a parent, I understand the concern parents feel when their sons and daughters take the wheel in the months after they get their drivers’ licenses,” Representative Burns said. “While I believe this bill still needs work, the good that it will do far outweighs some of the concerns I have about it. I’m confident the state legislature will iron out whatever shortcomings in the law become apparent in the years ahead. Meanwhile, parents should feel more confident that our action today will help ensure the future safety of all Connecticut motorists – not just teenagers.”