



July 1992

Reporter

A Monthly Newsletter about Radar, Radar Detectors and Transportation Issues

News Flash!

Connecticut Repeals Detector Ban

On October 1, Connecticut's name will be removed from the list of states which prohibit radar detector use.

With two votes to spare in the House of Representatives and the absolute minimum necessary in the Senate, the state's legislature on June 22 overrode Gov. Lowell Weicker's veto of the repeal, House Bill 5846. The law goes into effect October 1.

HB 5846 originally passed both chambers by wide margins—105-39 in the House in late April and 25-6 in the Senate on the last day of the legislature's regular session in early May.

The bill then met with the disapproval of Weicker. He said in an Associated Press article he could understand why drug runners and drunk drivers would want to use radar detectors, but not motorists who are "legitimate and obeying the laws of the state of Connecticut."

From the governor's point of view, all who travel with a radar detector have some reason to evade the law. He subsequently vetoed the "disgraceful piece of legislation."

Also testing lawmakers' resolve to end this ineffective and unfair law was a large, misleading newspaper advertisement which appeared just before the override vote. Paid for by a variety of police, medical and safety organizations—not to mention nine

big-name insurance companies—the ad called repeal of the detector ban "a matter of life and death."

"A radar detector is like a weapon in the hands of drunk, drugged and reckless drivers," the ad exclaimed. "Don't give speeders and drunk drivers a break."

In the end, lawmakers decided drivers do need a break, a break from the mistakes and misuse of police radar. Legislators listened to RADAR members, our lobbying firm, Sullivan & LeShane, the national and local chapters of the National Motorists Association and other detector advocates who presented facts instead of hype. Needing 101 votes to override the veto, lawmakers cast 103 in favor of the repeal; on the Senate side, 24 votes were needed, and that's exactly how many we got.

We here at RADAR extend our most sincere thanks to all who helped write the final chapter to the nation's first detector ban. This action will go a long way toward convincing other officials that detector bans just don't work.

Editor's note: Because of this important, late-breaking news, the second installment of our laser series was postponed until next month. ■

FCC Clears Way For CB Traveler Assistance

Already an essential tool for the long-distance driver, the CB radio soon will become even more important.

The Federal Communications Commission in an order released May 13 (DA 92-583) opened the way to one-way CB transmissions alerting travelers to particular highway conditions.

The order came in response to a Federal Highway Administration request on behalf of the organization which operates the Woodrow Wilson Bridge between Virginia and Maryland. The FHWA had asked the FCC for permission to transmit messages lasting about 15 seconds and repeated every three minutes notifying drivers of scheduled openings of the bridge.

The FCC concluded its rules already authorize such transmissions by government entities, but the commission revised section 95.418 to make it clear CBs may be used "to transmit one-way communications concerning highway conditions to other drivers."

With just a little imagination, it's easy to see numerous possibilities resulting from the FCC order. Automated messages could provide information about road work, traffic tie-ups and alternate routes around such problems. As part of a remote system, drivers could be warned of reduced visibility caused by fog or blowing sand.

As with drone radar and radar detectors, one-way CB information systems will

take advantage of the large existing installed base of citizens band radios to move drivers one step closer to the "intelligent" highways of the future. ■

RADAR Roundup

□ Maryland Rescinds Traffic-Stop Minimum

Maryland's acting state police superintendent says one of his captains acted inappropriately by ordering troopers to make at least five traffic stops per hour during a speed-enforcement program. Col. Larry