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SVBC is a 501(c)(3)  
non-profit organization  
EIN 77-0338658

<http://bikesiliconvalley.org>

February 17, 2015

The Honorable Mike Gatto  
Assemblymember, District 43  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 942849  
Sacramento, CA 94249-0043

RE: AB 8 (Gatto): Hit and run emergency alerts

Dear Assemblymember Gatto:

I am writing as the Executive Director of Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition (SVBC), a member-based non-profit with the mission to create a healthy community, environment, and economy through bicycling for people who live, work, or play in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties. SVBC would like to express our strong support of AB 8, a bill which would create a "Yellow Alert," similar to the existing "Silver Alert" and "Blue Alert," to notify the public when a hit-and-run resulting in a death or serious bodily injury has occurred and provide information about the vehicle or suspect involved.

Looking at the most recent Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS) data that is available, from 2012, there were 76 hit-and-run collisions in which a bicyclist was seriously injured or killed in Santa Clara County. Often, eyewitnesses to hit-and-runs are able to provide significant information about the make, model, and license plate number of the fleeing vehicle. Unfortunately, by the time this information reaches the public, the vehicle may already be at a body shop to be repaired and repainted or hidden away in a garage or yard. The result is that nationwide, less than half of all hit-and-run offenders are apprehended. These dismal statistics perpetuate the belief that fleeing the scene of an accident will rarely result in consequences and encourages deadly behavior.

The "Yellow Alert" system is a simple yet effective solution that would allow descriptive information about a vehicle involved in a hit-and-run to reach the public in a timely and effective manner, increasing the chances that these individuals, who demonstrate reckless disregard for human life, will be identified and brought to justice. Since implementing a similar alert system in 2012, authorities in Denver, Colorado have seen their hit-and-run arrest rate climb to 76%. This alert system was recently expanded to be a statewide program. By elevating hit-and-runs to the alert system it also sends a message that this is not acceptable roadway behavior and will be punished accordingly.

For these reasons, SVBC supports AB 8. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Corinne Winter  
President and Executive Director