

This bill that I'm proposing to you started with comments from several constituents in the last few years: they were annoyed by cars with windows tinted way too much – too dark to see whether the driver is looking in your direction to see you. More than annoyed, it's pretty dangerous to go ahead and cross the street, even with a light, if you can't confirm the driver sees you and will be waiting for you before turning. Same is true for a driver, if you can't tell whether the other driver is aware of you.

Tinted windows are a serious safety hazard for law enforcement, too, approaching a vehicle and not being able to see who and what's inside.

I talked with a State Trooper about the problem, and found out how many tickets they issue in a year – 1,400 in 2010, for example. (Local law enforcement issues tickets, too.) I asked what they thought we could do to improve safety.

The point is not to keep collecting fines, it's to get the windows into compliance. So, the idea is to make this a "*fix-it ticket*" – like tickets for noisy mufflers, or improper fenders or mudguards. Statutes are clear about allowing judicial discretion to lower or dismiss fines for certain violations, but it's not clear about window tinting that exceeds the allowed level.

The objective with this bill is to improve public safety for law enforcement, pedestrians, cyclists, and other drivers. This provides an incentive to remove the safety hazard by making it clear in statute that judges may dismiss or reduce the fine if violators bring tinting into compliance with current law.