

WalkBike Springfield Holyoke's Biking and Pedestrian Committee

PRESS RELEASE

TIMING: IMMEDIATE

CONTACT: Betsy Johnson 413-250-9622
walkbikespringfield@gmail.com

Hampden County Participates in 29th World Day of Remembrance

When: Sunday, November 17, 2024 1 PM

Where: By the Steps of Central Library, 220 State Street, Springfield, MA

“To emphasize that the **36 individuals** who perished on Hampden County roadways in the past year were loved ones,” says Todd Crosset of WalkBike Springfield, “this year our World Day of Remembrance event is starting with a ***Walk of Remembrance Across State Street.***” Family members of three who were crash victims on State Street by the Central Library will carry large photos across the currently under construction crosswalk – which the community has been requesting for years.

WalkBike Springfield and Holyoke's Biking and Pedestrian Committee are hosting the area's 2024 World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims. Pastor Willie Ballard of the Church of the Living God in Chicopee will give tribute to the 8 pedestrians, 11 motorcyclists, and 17 vehicle operators and passengers who perished, and the over 100 others who suffer from serious injury as a result of crashes. “For our ***Ceremony of Remembrance*** we will have 36 pairs of yellow-painted shoes upon which we will place a ribbon with the date of the crash and a flower” explains Deborah Huber of WalkBike Springfield. Relatives of victims will speak about needed change.

WalkBike Springfield and the Holyoke Biking and Pedestrian Committee are residents working to improve the safety of walking and bicycling in their communities and the region. The World Day of Remembrance is our opportunity to emphasize renewed attention to EDUCATION, ENFORCEMENT, AND ENGINEERING for safer roadways. Betsy Johnson of WalkBike Springfield and Kristen Sykes of Holyoke Bicycling and Pedestrian Committee explain, “We hope the event will lead to advocates, educators, police, and public works coordinating efforts for “Vision Zero” or no more road traffic victims.”

At the event, we will be joined by representatives of the statewide organizations of WalkMassachusetts and MassBike who will describe their efforts advocating for roadways that are safe for all users. Public officials, including Springfield City Council president Michael

Fenton, Holyoke City Councilor Kocayne Givner, State Senator Jake Oliveira, and others from Hampden County communities will be speaking about current efforts to redesign our roadways and other activities for safety.

The World Day of Remembrance is an international observance dedicated to remembering the many millions of road traffic victims throughout the world – begun by the European Federation of Road Traffic Victims (FEVR) in 1995 and adopted by the UN General Assembly Resolution 60/5 on October 26, 2005 as an “appropriate acknowledgement for victims of road traffic crashes and their families”.

Attendees are encouraged to wear yellow in recognition of the World Day of Remembrance.

