

Approved: 1-23-96  
Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Kenneth King at 1:30 p.m. on January 17, 1996 in Room 526-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:  
Rep. Delbert Crabb, excused

Committee staff present: Hank Avila, Legislative Research Department  
Tom Severn, Legislative Research Department  
Bruce Kinzie, Revisor of Statutes  
Ellie Luthye, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:  
Nancy Bogina, Department of Transportation  
Col. Lonnie McCollum, Kansas Highway Patrol  
Todd Spencer, Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association  
Anna Moore

Others attending: See attached list

The Chair called on Nancy Bogina from the Department of Transportation who presented three bills the Department would like to introduced. The first bill relates to state engineering services, concerning land surveying. The second concerns permits for oversize and overweight vehicles and the third bill repeals K.S.A. 74-7257, relating to the Kansas sunset law concerning the Department of Transportation and the office of the Secretary of Transportation. Representative Dillon made a motion for the committee to introduce these bills, seconded by Representative Pottorff and the motion carried.

**HB 2602 - increasing maximum speed limits.**

The Chair continued the hearings on **HB 2602** and called on Col. Lonnie McCollum for his testimony. He stated the mission of the Patrol is to enforce traffic and state laws relating to vehicles, highways and drivers to enhance the safety of the citizens traveling on the state roadways. It was the feeling of the Patrol that the maximum limit of 75 mph on the interstate system was too high and 70 was more acceptable. He also stated potentially hazardous situations would be created when drivers of cars maintain a higher legal limit than trucks, especially on two land roadways. (Attachment 1)

Todd Spencer urged the committee to adopt uniform speed limits for both cars and trucks. He stated all safety research conducted over the past 15 years show differential speed limits between cars and trucks increases accidents. Also, he stated, according to safety data compiled by the Federal Highway Administration, automobiles run into the backs of trucks three times as often as trucks run into the backs of cars which is a very convincing statistic on the problems with differential speed limits. He asked the committee to establish speed limits based on sound engineering principles and highway design since setting arbitrarily low speed limits did little more than foster disrespect for the law and discourtesy on the road between motorists. (Attachment 2)

Anna Moore told the committee she was a victim of an auto accident which was due to drivers speeding in the fog. She concluded the people of Kansas have survived under the 55/65 speed limits and asked that they not be changed. (Attachment 3)

Written testimony was provided by Ron Elniff, a school psychologist from Concordia High School (Attachment 4) and Reid S. Lerner (Attachment 5) both opposing higher speed limits.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, Room 526-S Statehouse, at 1:30 p.m. on January 17, 1996.

There being no other conferees the Chair closed hearings on **HB 2602**.

Kansas SAFE KIDS Coalition distributed a fact sheet on the activities and programs of the Coalition and also a list of the member organizations. (Attachment 6)

Staff distributed a chart showing the speed limits which had been enacted in several of the states. (Attachment 7)

Staff presented a balloon which showed the changes to **HB 2602** as requested by the Secretary of Transportation striking Sections 2, 3 and 4 and adding a new Section 3 and 8. This bill would also eliminate the 5/10 mile buffer and the car/truck differential.

The minutes for the meetings of January 10 and 16th were presented for corrections or approval. Representative Correll made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, seconded by Representative Dillon and the motion carried.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 2:30 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 18, 1996.

# HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE GUEST LIST

DATE: January 17, 1996

NAME	REPRESENTING
Kenny McNEILL	ABATE OF KS INC
Aletia M. Vaughn	KS. Ins Dept.
ANNA M MOORE	EVERYONE OVER 65
Cathy Jones	
Bearden Jones	SPECIAL INTEREST
Don Brunslee	KHP
Lomnie R. McColth	KHP
J. L. Keele	BLZ
Matt Towell	AP
Ken McCall	FHRLP
Brad Beets	FHRLP
HARRY HARDY	FHRLP
Bernard Irvine	FHRLP
MARK SKEETORACE	FHRLP
Don Stephen	
Burr Wilson	JK Leadership
Rebecca Bassman	Crossroads of Leadership Junction City

Kansas Highway Patrol  
Summary of Testimony  
1996 House Bill 2602  
before the  
House Transportation Committee  
January 17, 1996

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee. My name is Colonel Lonnie McCollum, Superintendent of the Kansas Highway Patrol, and I appear before you to comment on HB 2602 which amends maximum speed limits in Kansas.

Initially, we applaud the efforts of the Special Interim Committee on Transportation which toured the state and obtained information on the speed limit issue. That committee's efforts resulted in 1996 House Bill 2602 which you have before you today.

The mission of the Patrol is to enforce traffic and state laws relating to vehicles, highways and drivers to enhance safety of citizens traveling on our states roadways. As a result, we are concerned about issues which may jeopardize Kansas motorists and feel safety must be foremost when establishing speed limits. With this in mind, we offer the following comments regarding HB 2602.

The maximum limit of 75 m.p.h. on the interstate system is too high. Governor Graves' recommendation of not more than 70 m.p.h. is more acceptable. It would require only minimal change in existing driving skills and would allow law enforcement agencies more flexibility in speed enforcement.

The proposed limit of 65 m.p.h. on other roadways is acceptable in most cases. The majority of improved two lane highways are designed to safely support these speeds. The provisions of the bill allowing the secretary of transportation to adopt lower limits will provide flexibility in situations where lower speed limits are necessary.

The provisions mandating lower speed limits for trucks registered for a gross weight of over 20,000 pounds is cause for concern. Potentially hazardous situations will be created when drivers of cars attempting to maintain a higher legal limit encounter trucks traveling at a lower speed, especially on two lane roadways. Uniform speed limits help reduce the potential for these problems.

As a traffic safety agency, we feel it our duty to bring these issues to the attention of the committee and would urge you to consider our comments as you deliberate HB 2602.

*House Transportation Committee  
January 17, 1996  
Attachment 1*

KANSAS  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

TESTIMONY  
OF  
OWNER-OPERATOR INDEPENDENT DRIVERS  
ASSOCIATION

BY TODD SPENCER

JANUARY 17, 1996

RE: HB2602

STATE SPEED LIMITS

*House Transportation Committee  
January 17, 1996  
Attachment 2*

Good afternoon. My name is Todd Spencer. I'm the executive vice president of the Owner Operator Independent Drivers Association and prior to 1981 I drove a truck full-time in over-the-road long hauls. Our organization is the largest national professional association for small business trucking operations in the country. Our headquarters is in Grain Valley, Missouri and we currently have 31,000 members in the United States and in Canada. Many of our members reside in Kansas.

As the lawmakers consider legislation to amend the state's speed limits, the Owner Operator Independent Drivers Association ("OOIDA") urges lawmakers to adopt uniform speed limits for both cars and trucks. Uniform speed limits are the safest speeds for all vehicles on the highways.

Our members are primarily individuals that drive their own trucks in excess of 100,000 miles each year. To them, highway safety is a very serious issue - literally a matter of life and death.

While we are aware that conventional thinking is that since trucks are longer and heavier, they should be driven at slower speeds for safety reasons, nothing could be further from the truth. All safety research conducted over the past 15 years shows differential speed limits between cars and trucks increases accidents - specifically rear-end and sideswipe accidents.

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety verified the problems with differential speed limits in two separate studies of actual highway performance. These studies were conducted in 1989 and in 1991 by the University of Virginia.

Any speed differential between vehicles is a negative safety factor. To give you an example of how great the increased risks can be, researchers at the University of Texas concluded that when trucks travel 15 miles per hour slower than other vehicles they have accident involvement rates that are 9 times higher than trucks that run at the same speed as other traffic.

We are also aware there could be a concern that with higher speed limits, trucks may not be able to stop as quickly as cars so they will run into the backs of cars. This concern again can and should be addressed based on real highway experience. According to safety data on truck accidents compiled by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), automobiles run into the backs of trucks three times as often as trucks run into the backs of cars. We believe this is a very convincing statistic on the problems with differential speed limits.

Uniform speed limits are clearly the safest speed limits for Kansas highways.

Also, by approving uniform speed limits, the state avoids the costs of making and posting duplicate speed limit signs. As budgets continue to be squeezed, every dollar saved is important.

Our organization was actively involved in convincing Congress that individual states should decide appropriate speed limits for their highways. We urge lawmakers to establish speed limits based on sound engineering principles and highway design. This process should also consider existing motorist behavior, recognizing the average speeds being driven today. Most motorists drive at speeds they believe to be reasonable and prudent.

Setting arbitrarily low speed limits does little more than foster disrespect for the law, discourtesy on the road between motorists, while increasing the differential speeds between vehicles, making our highways less safe.

Thank you for your consideration of this important highway safety issue and thank you for allowing us the opportunity to participate.



## OWNER-OPERATOR INDEPENDENT DRIVERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

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National Headquarters: I-70 at Grain Valley Exit • OOIDA Building  
Mailing Address: 311 R.D. Mize Road, P.O. Box L, Grain Valley, MO 64029 • (816) 229-5791

### DIFFERENTIAL SPEED LIMITS: THE FACTS

Members of the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA) believe that differential speed limits are unsafe for the nation's highways. OOIDA believes that a uniform speed limit must be maintained for cars and trucks. The President of the Association, Jim Johnston, noted that even foes of the trucking industry have recognized the need for uniform speed limits. In testimony before the House of Representatives in June, 1994 CRASH co-chair Joan Claybrook noted:

Studies demonstrate that these slower speeds are much more dangerous than is commonly understood. A University of Texas study concluded that trucks which travel 15 mph below the prevailing speed of other vehicles have crash involvement rates nine times higher than those that travel at the same speed as other traffic. The same study found that the crash involvement rate is 15 times higher if the speed differential is 20 mph.

Data on rear-end crashes compiled and analyzed in a U.S. Government study showed that the rates of rear-end crashes increased sharply when speed reductions exceeded 20 mph.

Safety studies performed by the American Automobile Association have also shown that differential speed limits cause increases in "sideswipes" and rear-end accidents. In addition, the Department of Transportation has cited statistics indicating that cars and trucks moving at different speeds will decrease safety on the highways. OOIDA representatives stated, "When a car approaches a truck that is moving at a slower pace on the highway, the car has three choices: hit the brakes possibly causing a rear-end accident, hit the truck, or move to the left possibly causing a sideswipe." On behalf of the Association, Johnston maintained that "safety remains a strong concern for truckers, thus we discourage adoption of differential speed limits."



NO SAFETY BENEFITS ACHIEVED IN TRUCK LANE AND  
SPEED CONTROL STRATEGIES REPORTS AAA FOUNDATION

Imposing lane and speed restrictions on truck operations on multilane highways has been utilized to attempt to improve the safety and the quality of traffic flow on these highways. A study sponsored by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety which was conducted by the University of Virginia's School of Engineering and Applied Science has concluded that no safety benefits resulted from the imposition of speed and lane restrictions on trucks. In fact, the study concludes that the potential for an increase in accidents involving trucks and other vehicles occurs when such strategies are imposed on highways with high traffic volumes which include a high percentage of trucks.

UVA researcher, Dr. Nicholas Garber reported that restricting trucks to the right lane resulted in a decrease of the vehicular headways in this lane. Decreasing vehicular headways causes a reduction in the number of acceptable gaps available for drivers wanting to merge from entrance ramps. This in turn creates the "barrier" effect making it very difficult to merge and a hazardous situation for all motorists at entrance ramps. This negative effect is even more significant on highways having three or four lanes in each direction carrying an average daily traffic greater than 75,000 vehicles and with a proportion of trucks greater than 4 percent.

Other negative results of truck lane and speed control strategies are congestion and an increase in the skewness of speed distributions. As the percentage of trucks in the traffic stream increases, the potential for accidents increase. The more hazardous conditions concentrated in the right hand lane by such strategies do not significantly change speed distributions and accident potential of other lanes.

A copy of the report "The Effect of Truck Traffic Control Strategies on Traffic Flow and Safety on Multilane Highways" may be obtained by contacting the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, 1730 M Street, N.W., Suite 401, Washington, D.C. 20036, (202-775-1456).

1730 M Street, N.W., Suite 401, Washington, D.C. 20036

Fax (202) 775-1459

(202) 775-1456

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DIFFERENT SPEED LIMITS FOR TRUCKS AND  
CARS PROVIDE NO SAFETY BENEFITS

Ten states have different maximum speed limits for trucks and cars based on the theory that a lower speed for trucks would reduce conflicts between cars and trucks and thus result in lower accident and injury rates. But, there is very little evidence to support this theory of speed control.

In fact, a new AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety study conducted by the University of Virginia's Department of Civil Engineering reports that there is no safety benefit from differential truck/car speed limits and that there is evidence that different speed limits for trucks and cars may actually result in higher rates of certain kinds of accidents such as rear-enders and sideswipes.

The speed study was commissioned by the AAA Foundation because the recent change by most states to higher 65 mph speed limits on rural interstates provided an opportunity to test the differential maximum speed practice because some states permitted cars to go 65 mph but kept the limit for trucks at 55 mph. The analysis covered specific highway locations in California, Maryland, Michigan, Virginia and West Virginia. One highway location in Virginia and West Virginia provided a unique opportunity to test this theory because the two states used different speed approaches on the same highway.

Several other interesting findings resulted from the University of Virginia speed study:

\* In those states where cars were permitted to go faster (55 - 65 mph) the mean speeds of cars increased only from 1 to 4 mph, from a speed range of 61-64 mph to 62-67 mph. In other words, because most motorists were already driving over the old 55 mph speed limit, when the maximum speed limit was increased to 65, car speeds increased relatively little, for motorists tend to drive close to the design speed of the highway regardless of what signs say.

MORE

\* In states where both trucks and cars were permitted to go 65 mph, speed variance -- vehicles traveling at different speeds on the same roadway -- decreased and this was good, for previous studies have demonstrated that accidents decrease when speed variance decreases or, in other words, when all traffic is moving at approximately the same rate of speed. The study also showed that differential speed limits for trucks/cars increased speed variance.

\* In states which increased speed limits to 65 for all vehicles, there was no resulting significant increase in accidents.

\* No spillover effects on adjoining roads was evidenced in areas where the 65 mph was utilized. This has always been a major argument of critics of the higher speed limits.

Differential speed limits for cars and trucks have been in use for a long time, but researchers find little evidence to justify continuing this practice. It may cause more problems than it solves would be the conclusions of the University of Virginia researchers who prepared the AAA Foundation report. Copies of the report, "Impact of Differential Speed Limits on Highway Speeds and Accidents" may be obtained by contacting the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, 1730 M Street, N.W., Suite 401, Washington, D. C. 20036, (202) 775-1456).

5209 SW 32nd Ter.  
Topeka, KS 66614-4014  
Dec. 28, 1995

Office of the Governor  
Second Floor  
State Capitol  
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Governor Graves:

I sincerely believe that increasing the speed limits would be disastrous for the State of Kansas.

Someone once wrote that you can't go home again. I don't believe that we can return to the 1973 speed limits because so much has changed in the past 23 years.

For instance, the age of the driving population has changed. The "baby boomers" are now reaching their 50's and the over-65 group is growing larger every day. Many of this age group can't handle higher speed limits and most of them don't want to drive faster. They have learned the wisdom of leaving early and driving carefully to arrive at their destination safely.

There are more teen-agers driving vehicles than there were in 1973. The teen-agers today are very different from the the teen-agers of 1973. They are undisciplined and unsupervised and their reckless driving is reflected in the 1995 statistics. From time immemorial the young have always believed that "nothing can harm them" and they drive with that attitude.

Audi advertises that they have the safest car to drive on the highway but who can afford a starting price of \$26,000? Consequently, people are driving smaller, cheaper cars. I refer to these vehicles as "plastic toys". Can you imagine what one of those "toys" will look like when it slams into one of those concrete dividers going 80 miles an hour?

You are familiar with the old maxim - "If it isn't broken don't fix it". Why change the present speed limits? The people of Kansas are surviving nicely under the 55/65 limits so why tempt fate.

*House Transportation Committee  
January 17, 1996  
Attachment 3*

My husband and I survived an automobile accident in October 1995. We attribute our survival to the fact that we were driving a Chrysler Fifth Avenue which was able to sustain the beating it took and the fact that my husband had slowed down because of the visibility. It was a foggy day and other drivers continued to drive 65 and higher which caused a pile up of vehicles. It is also a fact that many drivers do not use common sense when driving conditions dictate otherwise. If you raise the limits to 75 or 80, they will drive 75 or 80 fair weather or foul.

I sincerely hope your will reconsider raising the speed limits.

A Kansas survivor,

ANNA M. MOORE.

5209 SW 32nd Ter.  
Topeka, KS 66614-4014  
Jan. 10, 1996

Rep. Kenneth King  
Chairman, House Transportation Committee  
Rm. 431 North  
State Capitol  
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Mr. King:

Before the Legislature rushes into making a decision to raise the current speed limits on Kansas highways please allow me to give you some input.

Have you ever been involved in an auto accident? If you have not, thank your lucky stars. In October 1995, my husband and I survived an automobile accident. Although our car was totalled, my husband and I sustained only minor bruises. Other people involved were not so lucky. Every time I reflect on our brush with death I still shake. The cause of the accident was due to drivers speeding in the fog. For some reason when normally sane, sensible people get behind the wheel of a car they seem to lose all their sense of responsibility to their fellow men.

**It is a fact -SPEED KILLS!** If you raise the speed limits there will certainly be more accidents and more deaths. In the past, the State Legislature had a difficult time reaching a decision to implement the death penalty in the State of Kansas yet you are willing to possibly sentence hundreds of people to death by raising the speed limits. Presently, with the top speed set at 65 mph. many people drive 70 or 75 on the turnpike. If you raise the limit to 75 mph. these same people will drive 80 and 85 mph. That is the nature of humans.

When the accident rates increase so will the insurance rates. The people who will suffer the most from the increases will be those on fixed incomes and those males under the age of 25. And it follows that if the accidents increase the health insurance rates will also rise.

The State Legislature has fought for many years to keep gambling out of the State yet you are willing to gamble with the lives of hundred of innocent people by giving free rein to those irresponsible drivers who will be driving on the roads of Kansas. Do you really want the death of innocent people on your conscience?

With the State of Kansas operating on such a tight budget why subject the State to the additional cost of changing the speed signs on the highways? Why disturb the status quo?

I am enclosing a copy of the letter I sent to Governor Graves on this subject.

Sincerely,



ANNA M. MOORE

cc: Rep. Tom Bradley

Encl. Ltr to Gov. Graves

**MR. RON ELNIFF, SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST,**  
**LCNCK Special Education Cooperative**  
**CONCORDIA HIGH SCHOOL CONCORDIA, KANSAS 66901**  
**913-243-2452 or 913-243-3294**

Wednesday, January 16, 1996

Dear: Mr. King, Chairman, House Transportation committee  
 and committee members

I am writing to voice my opinion on the speed limit.

Over the weekend another person I had worked with was killed on our 'rarely traveled rural highways', this time a mother. She was killed in a car / train accident. Her 6 year old daughter and her husband are still hospitalized. And in my immediate family—we have been involved in 2 traffic accidents resulting in 3 deaths in the past 6 years. These tragedies prompted me to express my opinion on the issue of speed limits and the safety of people on Kansas highways.

**I favor the following speed limits:**

**-55 mph on 2 lane roads—both day and night**

**-65 mph on 4 lane freeways, inter-states, etc.**

**All speed limits should be strictly enforced, (i.e.—no 10 mph 'cushion')**

My reasons:

- There will be fewer traffic deaths. (in 1980—there were 595 fatalities—in 1995 there were 429—a decrease of almost 200 lives.) No doubt—it is difficult to separate the factor of 'speed' from the other contributing factors, including stiffer laws on drunk driving, increased safety of vehicles, engineering advances, air bags, etc. **But--If God informed you that you and your family were going to have a head on collision tomorrow, but you could request of the speed of the other driver—any speed between 55 mph and 70 mph—what would you request? Yes—common sense and statistics tell us—**  
increased speed translates to increased risks, which translates to increased deaths.

- It is a more efficient, and "there will come a time" when we will 'once again' have to attend to energy conservation.

- It allows for safe and defensive driving, while at the same time allowing for increased relaxation and enjoyment of the beautiful scenery our State offers.

- We are accustomed to this safer speed limit. If we raise it, then have to lower it again (and we will--sometime), it will be more difficult than keeping it where it is.

**NOW** - What are the advantages of **raising** the speed limit?

- People wanting to get to their destination 'quicker'. (In a 200 mile 'cross country' trip, with breaks, time for lunch, etc., the time difference would be about 30 minutes. What would we do that is so 'earth shattering' in that 30 minutes?)

-The only other reason I can think of is 'Helping the financial status of hospitals and mortuaries'.

**Is Kansas trading the lives and safety of citizens for 'quicker arrival times'?  
 I support continuation of a safe speed limit. I would like you to support A 55  
 MPH SPEED LIMIT in the state of Kansas.**

Sincerely,

*Ron Elriff*  
 Ron Elriff

*P.S. Thank you for your attention.*

Citizen, parent, School Psychologist, etc.) Concordia, Kansas

House Transportation Committee  
 January 17, 1996  
 Attachment 4



## State Transportation Committee Topeka, Kansas

January 16, 1996

Members of the Committee:

My name is Reid S. Lerner and I am a friend of Jene Vickrey. I contacted him a few weeks ago about my concerns about President Clinton's decision to repeal the federal speed limit and allow states to determine the speeds on their roads. The following are points that I feel must be addressed before the committee makes its final decision on the issue of speed limits within the boundaries of the great state of Kansas.

I am a 34 year old man and am married. I live in a rural area and commute 30 minutes to work. My wife and I work in a Kansas area school district; she teaches at the high school level, and I work with computers at the elementary level. I have some law enforcement education out of high school, have operated my own over the road trucking business for a year, and have driven a school bus for 7 years prior to my current job.

Jene has urged me to testify before the committee because he feels I have brought forth many good points and ideas. I am unfortunately unable to leave my public school job today in order to testify, as I have several meetings I must attend. Jene and I decided that I would fax him and you the information that I would have presented in person. Please take the time to review the information. Thank you very much.

### **Objective:**

To provide all citizens and travelers a safe and prudent system of highway transportation within the borders of the state of Kansas from East to West and North to South. Whether it be a young driver of 14 on a special permit or a senior citizen it is our obligation as citizens and law makers to make that happen for all people who traverse our soil. We must look at all sides of the issue and make a proper and just decision.

### **Consider the following points when deciding appropriate speed limits:**

- More people will die due to the faster speed limits. Fifty-five ~~does~~ save lives.
- Most of our insurance rates will rise due to the many more accidents caused by higher speeds. It is estimated that our insurance rates will rise as much as 15% due to the higher speeds. How many more un-insured motorists will be traveling our roads due to this?
- Higher health insurance due to the higher number of injuries and medical problems relating to traffic accidents.
- Higher speeds DO NOT mean getting to your destination that much faster.

**Example:** If you travel 20 miles at 55 mph it takes 21.8 minutes to reach your destination.  
If you travel 20 miles at 65 mph it takes 18.5 minutes to reach your destination.  
If you travel 20 miles at 75 mph it takes 16.0 minutes to reach your destination.

**Is it worth the time savings?**

*House Transportation Committee  
January 17, 1996  
Attachment 5*

- Most of today's vehicles are 4 cylinder cars. Faster speeds mean more expensive auto repairs. Can older vehicles keep up?
- Airbags will not be as effective at higher rates of speed.
- If someone is traveling at the "minimum" speed of 40 miles per hour and someone tops a hill at 75 mph, what is going to happen to the person driving at the slower rate?
- What about farming communities? Tractors, etc.?
- Some four-lane highways become two-lane highways at some point, i.e. south of Louisburg on highway 69. How long will it take drivers to reduce their speed? Or will they?
- Less time to react in emergency situations, i.e. wildlife, road damage, vehicle failure (tire blow out), obstructions in the road, weather conditions, etc.
- Trucks will travel at the same rate as cars, no matter what the law says. Some will even go at a faster rate of speed. Do you really want 80,000-pound semi tractor-trailer trucks zipping down the interstates and highways at a speed of 75 mph?!! Think of the damage they will cause to the roads.
- It is possible that fourteen-year old people will be driving on these interstates and highways. Do you think they can handle the responsibility of controlling an automobile that is traveling at 75 mph?
- Faster speeds will more rapidly deteriorate the road surfaces. Federal tax dollars are being cut. Does the state have the funds to maintain the roads?
- Just how much will it cost to replace all of the speed limit signs in the state? What fund does this come from?
- Have we forgotten the oil embargo of the 70's?

I do feel that there are some situations that merit raising the speed limit, but please remember that people will drive five to ten miles per hour above that limit. I suggest following Missouri's conservative position: 55 on all two-lane highways, 65 on some rural four-lane highways, 70 on well-maintained interstates, and 55 on urban interstates. Please vote to keep the speed limits in our state of Kansas at a reasonable and safe level. All of our lives depend on it!! Thank you for this opportunity to address the committee on such an important issue.

Sincerely,

Reid S. Lerner  
13365 W. 265th Street  
Louisburg, Kansas 66053  
(913)837-2680



900 SW Jackson, Suite 901N  
Topeka, KS 66612-1290  
(913) 296-1223  
(913) 296-8059 (FAX)

**Coordinator:**  
Jan Stegelman

*Kansas Department of  
Health and Environment*

**Executive Committee:**

Dennis Cooley, MD  
*Medical Advisor  
American Academy of  
Pediatrics, Kansas  
Chapter*

Michele Hinds  
*Kansas State  
Nurses Association*

Steve Jensen  
*Kansas Highway Patrol*

Judy Moler  
*Corporation For Change*

Wendy Moseman  
*Kansas Emergency  
Nurse Association*

Gene Neely  
*Kansas National  
Education Association*

Kathryn Nelick  
*Coordinator,  
Lawrence Chapter,  
Kansas SAFE KIDS  
Coalition*

# Kansas SAFE KIDS Coalition

Far sheet

The Kansas SAFE KIDS Coalition, Inc. is a group of sixty statewide organizations and businesses that have joined together to protect Kansas children from unintentional injury. The Kansas SAFE KIDS Coalition is part of the National SAFE KIDS Campaign.

Injuries are the leading killer of Kansas kids. More children die annually from preventable, unintentional injuries than from all childhood diseases combined. This year, one child in four will suffer a preventable injury serious enough to require medical attention. The great tragedy is that most of these injuries can be prevented.

The primary activities and programs of the Kansas SAFE KIDS Coalition include:

**PLEASE BE SEATED:**

The PLEASE BE SEATED program addresses the leading cause of unintentional injury in Kansas children **motor vehicle crashes**. The program is designed to keep our kids safe by involving all Kansas citizens in the education of the importance of child safety seats and safety belt use.

**CYCLE SMART:**

The CYCLE SMART program is designed to increase the number of children protected by a bicycle helmet by making reduced priced helmets available to Kansas children. During the first two years of the program, approximately 20,000 helmets have been distributed to Kansas children.

**GET ALARMED®:**

The GET ALARMED® program is designed to increase the number of homes with young children that are equipped with working smoke detectors. Participating communities distribute and install smoke detectors or replacement batteries in low-income homes.

**Public Policy:**

The Kansas SAFE KIDS Coalition adopts on an annual basis a public policy platform and public policy priorities. The Coalition is currently working on statewide smoke detector legislation.

**Local SAFE KIDS Coalitions:**

Kansas currently has three local SAFE KIDS Coalitions: Wichita Area SAFE KIDS Coalition, Lawrence SAFE KIDS Coalition, and the Greater Kansas City SAFE KIDS Coalition. In addition, the Kansas SAFE KIDS Coalition has four local chapters in Salina, Barber County, Topeka, and Manhattan. Coalition activities are undertaken through the local Coalitions and chapters as well as by Coalition member organizations.

**SAFE KIDS CHECK ✓ AMERICA**

The SAFE KIDS Check ✓ America program is a cooperative effort with local schools. The program includes a ten-item checklist completed by the students and family which evaluates the safety of the child's home and community. A variety of educational materials and annual prizes are offered to participating schools.



*House Transportation Committee  
January 17, 1996  
Attachment 6*



900 SW Jackson, Suite 901N  
Topeka, KS 66612-1290  
(913) 296-1223  
(913) 296-8059 (FAX)

**Coordinator:**

Jan Stegelman  
*Kansas Department of  
Health and Environment*

**Executive Committee:**

Dennis Cooley, MD  
*Medical Advisor  
American Academy of  
Pediatrics, Kansas  
Chapter*

Michele Hinds  
*Kansas State  
Nurses Association*

Steve Jensen  
*Kansas Highway Patrol*

Judy Moler  
*Corporation For Change*

Wendy Moseman  
*Kansas Emergency  
Nurse Association*

Gene Neely  
*Kansas National  
Education Association*

Kathryn Nelick  
*Coordinator,  
Lawrence Chapter,  
Kansas SAFE KIDS  
Coalition*

- AAA Kansas
- American Academy of Pediatrics, Kansas Chapter
- American Red Cross - Wyandotte County
- American Red Cross - Wichita
- Attorney General of Kansas
- Barber County Safety Team
- Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Kansas
- Children's Mercy Hospital
- Corporation for Change
- Dillon Stores
- Fire Education Assoc. of Kansas
- Greater Kansas City Area SAFE KIDS Coalition
- Head Injury Association of Kansas and Greater Kansas City
- Int'l Assoc. of Arson Investigators, KS Chapter
- Kansans for Highway Safety
- Kansas Assoc. of Local Health Departments
- Kansas Healthy Start Home Visitors
- Kansas Highway Patrol
- Kansas Association of Broadcasters
- Kansas Department of Human Resources
- Kansas Department of Health & Environment
- Kansas Emergency Medical Tech. Association
- Kansas Emergency Nurse Association
- Kansas Insurance Department
- Kansas Medical Society
- Kansas State Board of Education
- Kansas Public Health Association
- Kansas Department of Transportation
- Kansas Professional Fire Chiefs Association
- Kansas Chapter, Intn'l Association of Arson Investigators
- Kansas MADD
- Kansas Association of Osteopathic Medicine
- Kansas Children's Service League
- Kansas Hospital Association
- Kansas State Fire Marshal
- Kansas Cooperative Extension 4-H
- Kansas Chiropractic Association
- Kansas Recreation & Park Association
- Kansas School Nurse Organization
- Kansas Association of School Boards
- Kansas Farm Bureau
- Kansas Congress of Parents and Teachers
- Kansas State Nurses' Association
- Kansas Dental Association
- Kansas State Association of Fire Chiefs
- Kansas Safety Belt Education Office
- Kansas SADD
- Kaw Valley Girl Scout Council
- KNEA
- Lawrence Chapter, KS SAFE KIDS Coalition
- Manhattan Chapter, Kansas SAFE KIDS Coalition
- Meadowlark Girl Scout Council of Kansas, Inc.
- Office of the Governor
- Salina Chapter, Kansas SAFE KIDS Coalition
- Safety and Health Council of Western Missouri & Kansas
- Sedgwick County Area SAFE KIDS Coalition
- Stormont-Vail Regional Medical Center
- United School Administrators of Kansas
- University of Kansas Medical Center, Child Development Unit
- University of Kansas Medical Center, Burn Center
- Western Resources



1/10/96

**DRAFT--By Jan Goehring**

State	New Speed Limit
Montana*	No maximum during the daytime
Wyoming*	75 mph
Nevada*	75 mph
Oklahoma*	70 mph
Texas*	70 mph for passenger cars; 60 mph for trucks (during the day)
California*	70 mph takes effect after decisions by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and California Highway Patrol
Kansas	Legislature is considering
Colorado	75 mph cap, CDOT to study
South Dakota	Proposed 75 mph on interstate
Wisconsin	Two bills pending--AB 618, 70 mph limit and AB 641, 65 mph limit
Georgia	H 1119--proposes 75 mph
Illinois	H 2629--proposes 55 mph on county roads
Kentucky	S 83--proposes 70 mph on interstates and 4-lane highways
Missouri	S 503
Nebraska	L 901; L 920
Ohio	H534 and S 242--proposes 65 mph on interstates and state highways constructed to interstate standards
Utah	H 29; S 21
Virginia	SJR 7--Requests Secretary of Transportation to establish task force to study speed limits

\*Speed limits automatically reverted upon the lifting of the federal maximum.

*House Transportation Committee  
January 17, 1996  
Attachment 7*

**SPEED: WHAT'S YOUR LIMIT?—Draft**  
 By Janet B. Goehring and James B. Reed

Drivers who used to watch for troopers in their rearview mirrors as they sped down the highway at 75 miles per hour can relax—in some states at least. Now that the federal maximum speed limit has been lifted, states will set their own. This new “freedom” was met with praise as well as concern. Many Western legislators felt their expansive open spaces called for faster speeds on the often lonely highways. Others argued that states could more appropriately set speed limits. Safety advocates feared an increase in highway fatalities.

**MONTANA** and **WYOMING** were ahead of the game, each having legislation that allowed the speed limit to automatically revert to pre-1974 levels once the federal limit was lifted. Wyoming's limit returned to 75 miles per hour on rural highways. Montana's only limitation during the daytime is that drivers go at a “reasonable and proper” speed—in effect, no limit. **NEVADA**, **TEXAS** and **OKLAHOMA** also allowed the speed limit to immediately increase. In 20 states, administrative agencies like the department of transportation are already empowered to set speed limits. **MARYLAND**, **NEW YORK** and **PENNSYLVANIA** raised their limits to 65 mph in 1995.

In **COLORADO**, Representative Ron May introduced the “Reasonable Speed Limit Bill” that places a 75 mph cap on speed limits. The bill refers specific speed limit determinations to the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). May indicated CDOT will be required to set limits with “highway design standards and safety standards

in mind." The cost of the whole program is estimated at \$200,000. Colorado will also be looking at disincentives for speeding such as higher penalty points against a driver's license for speeds 20 mph or more over the limit. Colorado legislators involved the state highway patrol in the process of designing the speed limit bill. The state patrol supports the bill and plans a public relations program to explain enforcement policies. One concern raised by law enforcement is that people drive too close together, which increases the risk of accidents. An education campaign is under consideration.

Two different groups of WISCONSIN legislators filed separate speed limit bills for 1995. Assembly Bill 641, raises the maximum speed limit to 65 mph on certain highways. The fiscal impact is estimated at \$15,000 for new signs. The second bill, AB 618 creates a maximum limit of 70 mph. The fiscal impact statement for AB 618 estimates a one time cost of \$700,000 for signs, pavement markings for no passing zones and posting advisory speeds for curves. It also projects a long term cost of \$2 million to \$3 million to reconstruct highways for the higher speeds.

In addition to the fiscal impacts, a variety of factors need to be considered by state legislators in setting new maximum speed limits. Increased fuel consumption at higher speeds presents an energy conservation issue. Pollutants also increase as speeds increase. With the development of more fuel efficient cars, however, these issues are not as important as safety issues.

Many worry about safety. Safety studies show an increase in crash severity and fatalities at higher speeds. The Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety estimate over 6,000 additional deaths annually as a result of the higher limits. Such an increase also raises the economic cost to society, including associated health care costs. But, studies by Charles Lave of the University of California Transportation Center seem to contradict these predictions. He argues that when the limit increased to 65 mph in 1987, the state and systemwide effects resulted in an overall lower fatality rate. One possible reason is that the highway patrol focused on safety rather than speed enforcement.

To address safety concerns, states may impose other restrictions. For example, catching and penalizing extreme speeders, clamping down on drunk drivers and enforcing seat belt requirements reduce some risks. Allowing law enforcement officers to stop drivers solely for a seat belt violation may increase belt usage. Extensive driver education about safety also would be beneficial. Finally, states may consider graduated licensing to protect high risk drivers in the 16 to 18 age bracket. Graduated licensing requires young drivers to demonstrate responsible driving behavior through three phases of licensing--learner's permit, intermediate or provisional license and full license.

One way to set maximum speed limits is to use the speed zoning approach. Based on traffic engineering studies, the best way to ascertain an appropriate speed limit is to survey the speeds of free flowing traffic. The studies show that the speed at which 85 percent of the vehicles are traveling, or below, has generally been determined to be a limit that minimizes accident risk and maximizes motorist compliance. Speed zoning allows limits



to be set based upon scientific principles that take into account local road and traffic conditions.

Fiscal impacts, environmental concerns, safety and traffic engineering studies all play into how a state evaluates its speed limits. With the lifting of the federal maximum speed limit, appropriate limits will be based on each state's unique situation.

### **Sidebar**

The U.S. Senate passed S. 440, The National Highway System Designation Act, on June 22, 1995. Several amendments to the bill removed federal mandates and highway funding sanctions, one of which repealed the national 55 mph speed limit first passed in 1974. The measure was approved by the House and signed into law by President Clinton on Nov. 28, 1995.

The following table shows the states with legislation that automatically raised the maximum speed limits upon removal of the federal maximum.

State	New Maximum Speed Limit
Montana	No maximum during the daytime
Wyoming	75 mph
Nevada	75 mph
Oklahoma	70 mph
Texas	70 mph
California	70 mph takes effect after decisions by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and California Highway Patrol

**Selected References**

Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety. *States at Risk: A Report on the Effect of Repealing the National Maximum Speed Limit*. Washington, D.C., November 1995.

Lave, Charles and Patrick Elias. *Did the 65 mph Speed Limit Save Lives?* Reprinted from *Accident Analysis and Prevention* 26, no. 1 (1994) 49-62.

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