



Support for Proposed Variable Speed Limit and Hard Shoulder Running Pilot Projects along Interstate 670

Written Testimony from
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Dear Chairman Smith, Vice Chairman Ryan, Ranking Member Cera, and Members of the House Finance Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide supportive testimony for the Variable Speed Limit and Hard Shoulder Running proposals within the Transportation Budget.

As you may know the Columbus Regional Airport Authority has authority over three central Ohio airports- John Glenn Columbus International Airport, Rickenbacker International Airport and Bolton Field.

John Glenn International had our second busiest year in 2016, serving 7.3 million passengers and our growth doesn't look like it will be slowing down anytime soon. We strive to provide our passengers with a safe and efficient travel experience. As part of this experience, getting to the airport along I-670 during peak hours can be difficult for our passengers and the congestion along the I-670 corridor has the potential to delay our customers.

The Columbus Regional Airport Authority provides support for the Variable Speed Limit proposal and Hard Shoulder Running Pilot Projects in hopes that together these programs reduce congestion along I-670 to and from the airport. We understand that this is new and so a pilot program with flexibility will be critically important so that the program can be adjusted should there be need.

As you may know, Europe has seen crashes drop by nearly 30 percent since using variable speed limits and secondary crashes, the result of backed up traffic caused by an earlier crash, are down by 50 percent. A recent ODOT study shows promising results for applying these innovative practices, resulting in a 40 percent reduction of traffic delays in Columbus and Cincinnati.

Governor Kasich's budget proposal to test hard shoulder running on I- 670 in Columbus would complement the variable speed limit test. The pilot program would allow ODOT to turn the inside shoulder lane into an extra lane of travel during peak hours. By utilizing this technique, which has been successfully implemented in several other states, Ohio can strengthen efforts to keep traffic and commerce moving.