



Testimony to the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee

Tuesday, June 2, 2020

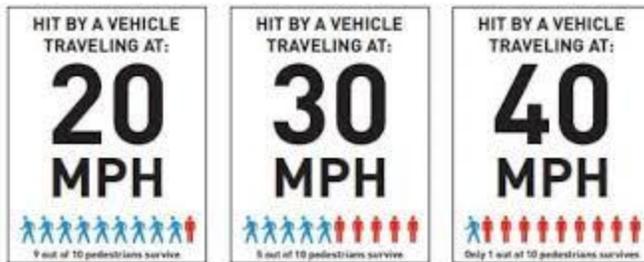
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Chairman Green, Vice-Chair McClain, Ranking-Member Sheehy, ladies and gentlemen of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on behalf of HB 384. We are grateful to Representatives Boggs and Leland for sponsoring the bill. The Ohio Bicycle Federation fully supports the bill to allow local residents to request lowered speed limits and additional stop signs on streets in their neighborhoods.

Studies have shown that crashes involving higher speeds lead to more fatalities for pedestrians¹. This also applies to cyclists who are hit by cars traveling at higher speeds. The following graphic shows that only 1 of 10 pedestrians survive being hit at 40 mph, 5 of 10 pedestrians survive being hit at 30 mph and 9 pedestrians survive being hit at 20 mph.



As an advocate for cyclists and pedestrians (particularly pedestrians with disabilities), I have learned about the rules for lowering speed limits based on engineering studies. When we have tried to ask for speed limits to be lowered on streets which are preferred by cyclists, we have not been successful because the engineering studies do not support the lower speeds. We are not transportation engineers, but we live and travel on these roads and see the dangers of speeding every day. Engineering studies include the 85th percentile rule, that if 85% of motorists drive at or above the speed limit, then the speed limit should not be lowered. Motorists are not going to drive lower than the posted speed.

We have also been dismayed to see the removal of traffic signals on our streets. 50 traffic signals were removed from Columbus streets in the last few years and this leaves long distances between traffic signals that force pedestrians and cyclists to cross midblock or

¹¹ US Department of Transportation, *Literature Reviewed on Vehicle Travel Speeds and Pedestrian Injuries*. March 2000.

at unsignalized intersections. Less traffic signals also lead to increased speeds on the streets. Motorists are unaware that pedestrians have the right-of-way at unmarked crosswalks and midblock if the adjacent intersections do not have traffic signals, and the motorists will not yield. If we could request 4-way stops at locations where traffic signals are removed, then the traffic would be slower and safer for pedestrians and cyclists. We wish this bill allowed residents to request to retain or add traffic signals as well, not only for the safety of motorists and cyclists, but also to accommodate audible signals for pedestrians who are blind. Engineering studies also determine where traffic signals are needed, but the traffic volume warrants often preclude a traffic signal despite the lack of safe crossings for pedestrians. We also wish this bill allowed local businesses and business associations to request lower speed limits and stop signs, because commercial districts are also experiencing the removal of traffic signals.

We support this bill and encourage you to pass it.