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December 2, 2020

To: House Transportation Committee
State Representative Bradley Slagh

Re: HB 4733 -- Speed limits

The Detroit Greenways Coalition SUPPORTS the HB 4733 currently before the House Transportation Committee.

As you may recall, we did not support the bill as introduced. However, Representative Bradley Slagh and his office did a very commendable job of bringing together stakeholders, listening to our concerns, and improving the bill language.

Safety for bicyclists and pedestrians is a priority concern for our organization. Vehicle speed is the major factor in whether a bicyclist or pedestrian will survive when hit by a motor vehicle. Speed limits are recognized as an effective tool for reducing vehicle speeds.^{1 2}

Existing Michigan speed limit law is unclear on the flexibility to set speed limits based on engineering factors besides the 85th percentile. Nationwide, relying solely on the 85th percentile is seen as antiquated and not a best practice.^{3 4}

This consensus is growing given the significant increase in traffic crashes during COVID-19. The Michigan State Police has said this increase is due in large part to motorists traveling at higher speeds.⁵ This increased speeding not only increases crashes, it can increase the 85th percentile. We shouldn't raise speed limits in response.

This bill would clarify the law to ensure there is modest flexibility when setting safer speed limits on state, county, and local roads.

Again, we want to reiterate our appreciation to Representative Slagh and his staff for improving this bill and gaining our full support.

Sincerely:

Todd Scott
Executive Director

cc: Senator Stephanie Chang

¹ [Countermeasures that work: A Highway Safety Countermeasure Guide for State Highway Safety Offices](#), NHTSA, 2015.

² ["Drivers brake for lower speed limit"](#), Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, 2018.

³ [Reducing Speeding-Related Crashes Involving Passenger Vehicles](#), NTSB, 2017.

⁴ [NCUTCD Proposal for Changes to the 5 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices](#), 18B-RW-03, 2019.

⁵ [Michigan roads see fewer cars, more traffic deaths in 2020](#), Detroit Free Press, October 19, 2020.