



NORTON SHORES POLICE DEPARTMENT

4814 Henry Street, Norton Shores, MI 49441

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Chairman Nate Shannon and members of the House Committee on Transportation, Mobility and Infrastructure

Support for HB4012,

As the Chief of Police for the City of Norton Shores and a commissioner for the Governor's Traffic Safety Commission, I endorse HB4012. The Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police Traffic Safety Committee also endorses this Bill.

I have spoken with Chiefs and Sheriffs across the State of Michigan and many have not followed the current law on establishing speed limits in our jurisdictions in Michigan for many reasons;

1. Costs associated with expensive traffic studies for new signs and roadway marking.
2. Most municipalities and townships do not have traffic engineers on staff to perform these studies. The costs associated with hiring an engineer for each roadway is an unaffordable cost.
3. Difficulty in applying the 85th percentile mandate when establishing a speed limit and rounding that number up to the nearest multiple of five.
4. Mathematical equations do not always establish a correct speed limit for a given area.

The new language in HB4012 is supported because it gives municipalities the ability to round down to the nearest multiple of five if the 85th percentile is closer to the lower number. Rounding up does not always make sense when safety is the most important factor in the determining speed limit.

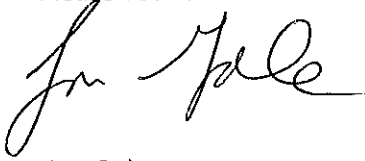
Most importantly is the ability to use a traffic engineer if a certain section of roadway (rare circumstance) has issues that a mathematical equation does not solve. The rare stretch of roadway may have high pedestrian counts, camping areas, schools, busy churches and blind corners and curves.

In the City of Norton Shores, we experienced another fatal pedestrian crash involving a driver that was traveling the speed limit but did not see a pedestrian crossing because of the high speeds set by the 85th percentile. This stretch of roadway is curved and near a busy retail area. The intersection has continued to produce fatal and near fatal pedestrian crashes because of the complexity of the roadway and the speeds. We are unable to perform an objective analysis of the characteristics of the roadway using a traffic engineer to determine the proper speed limit for this area due to the 85th percentile mandate.

In summary we all understand and agree that the 85th percentile traffic mandate is an important starting point for a speed limit and in most circumstances is the correct method but we cannot legislate every roadway using a mathematical number to determine safety of our streets throughout the State. In most municipalities and townships there is a growing effort to transform cities and suburbs into places that are environmentally sustainable and safer for bicyclists and pedestrians and this has created a new push

for reducing traffic spend. Fatal crashes are increasing the last few years and speed is the number one cause.

Please vote to make our streets safer in the municipalities and townships we serve.



Jon Gale

Chief of Police

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